

COURTING THE READER  
RHETORICAL STYLE IN CULTURE AND ANARCHY

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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Courting the Reader :  
Rhetorical Style in Culture and Anarchy

by

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## ABSTRACT

Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy questions and discusses the opinions of politicians, clergy, and educators in a unique rhetorical style. This thesis examines Arnold's rhetorical style by examining the specific strategies that Arnold used to create a special relationship with the reader. Arnold's use of these strategies and his rhetorical method are traced back to his knowledge of German literature, specifically to Goethe, and the process through which he wrote Culture and Anarchy.

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## INTRODUCTION

Matthew Arnold's polemical text, Culture and Anarchy, reflects Arnold's views on the politics and social structure of mid-nineteenth century Britain (Trilling 230-233; Chesterton 29-32). In order to express those views in what Arnold called a "receivable manner," (Letters 1:315) he developed a unique style (Gates 124-129; Holloway 202-207; Ohmann 308), one which he hoped would encourage the reader to define culture broadly (Gates 142).

Arnold's style claimed the attention of critics immediately. Lewis Gates in 1899, a mere eleven years after Arnold's death, says: "Admirers of Arnold's prose find it well to admit frankly that his style has an unfortunate knack of exciting prejudice" (124). Having pronounced on Arnold's style, Gates discusses Arnold's purpose, which he believes to be a spiritually regenerative one:

The purpose with which Arnold writes is now fairly apparent. His aim is to shape in happy fashion the lives of his fellows; to free them from the bonds that the struggle for existence imposes upon them spiritually, and to call all that is best within them into as vivid play as possible. (151)

More recently, Lionel Trilling tells readers that Arnold's purpose becomes united with his style when his ambition is to teach history "dialectically":

The ambivalence of opinion which the dialectical method produces is an impossible burden to some people but to others it is a positive pleasure; Arnold was one of the latter. (165)

Although we may agree with Trilling that the dialectical method is not a burden to Arnold, it proves to be an insurmountable one to some of his critics. For instance, T.S. Eliot charges that Arnold lacks the "power of connected reasoning at any length: his flights are either short flights or circular flights" (Essays 431) and are, therefore, impossible to understand.

G.K. Chesterton maintains, however, that Arnold's style is his most important contribution to literature because it is:

founded on the patient unravelling of the tangled Victorian ideas, as if they were matted under a comb. He did not mind how elaborately long he made a sentence, as long as he made it clear. (31)

Although T.S. Eliot's argument is that Arnold did not make his sentences clear, Chesterton believes that Arnold is dedicated to clear communication and that he uses repetition: "repeating whole phrases word for word in the same sentence," in order not to risk "ambiguity by abbreviation" (31).

Recent critical work on Arnold's style explores his intricate arguments, his rhetorical manipulation of

opponents, and his use of a number of prose strategies more commonly thought to belong to fiction than to polemics. One of the first critics to discuss some of these rhetorical strategies at length, John Holloway describes Arnold's style of persuasion as "prestidigitation," a magician's sleight of hand, and explains the manner in which this style is employed to disarm his opponents:

To a degree quite unusual among polemical writers, Arnold's persuasive energy goes to build up, little by little, an intimate and a favourable impression of his own personality as an author, and an unfavourable impression, equally clear if less intimate and more generalized, of the personalities of his opponents. Over and over again one finds the discussion taking shape between these two poles. (207)

Holloway's description of Arnold's ability to make himself seem very agreeable to the reader while making his opponents seem less agreeable is augmented by Geoffrey Tillotson's view that Arnold is able to balance these two impressions without causing anyone pain:

To read him is to watch a performance of one who comes near to inflicting pain either without actually doing so, or with ointment so smartly applied that the sting melts away. (114)

While Holloway and Tillotson emphasize Arnold's ability to judge and manage the reactions of his reader, William Buckler emphasizes Arnold's ability to create an emotional bond with his reader, as a poet would:

Arnold employed the manner of the modern poet: he made his point dramatically, evocatively,

accretively, metaphorically, and so successfully that many of those who have misconceived the manner have nonetheless felt its inherent force. (Prose 89)

All of these discussions emphasize Arnold's distinctive style and ability. Richard Ohmann believes that Arnold was able to develop his style partly from his knowledge of a wide range of literature, and partly from the forces that were quickly changing the world order. Ohmann cautions, however, that the changes affected writers in substantially different ways. He says that "[w]riters in a given period may share large parts of a conceptual scheme and a large number of emotional needs produced by culture, without sharing a style" (308). He then goes on to explain that "even the feeblest intuition of style tells us that Arnold's is very different from Newman's, Newman's from Carlyle's, and so on" (308).

Although critics generally agree that Arnold has a unique rhetorical style, they do not fully discuss the possible sources of his style. One of the widely acknowledged great influences on Arnold's life is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, an eighteenth century German writer. His influence on Arnold's writing, although acknowledged (DeLaura Hebrew 182-191), has not been traced through Arnold's many of Arnold's works, such as Culture and Anarchy. This thesis explores Arnold's use of one rhetorical strategy, his courtship of the audience, which reflects Goethe's influence over Arnold's style.



In chapter one I review the development of Culture and Anarchy from serialized essays into the text with which readers are familiar today. I argue that Arnold's development of the text is critical to his management of his reader's reaction to his ideas.

In chapter two I investigate Arnold's intellectual tie to the German philosopher-writer, Goethe, whose method of revolutionizing the narrative form profoundly influences Arnold's work. His admiration for the writing and philosophy of Goethe is an important link to the reader's understanding of Arnold's prose method.

The third chapter begins an exploration of courtship: a strategy Arnold would have been introduced to when reading Goethe's novels, and one he himself then uses to unify the text and befriend the audience. The "courtship" is an essential relationship for the writer to have with the reader, if the reader is to be kept open to morally and philosophically challenging questions.

In chapter four, "Strategies and Socrates," I explore Arnold's focus on Socrates' maxim "Know thyself," which is also a theme within Goethe's work. Throughout Culture and Anarchy, Arnold raises questions about "Hebraism" (Nonconformist protestantism) and "Hellenism" (Classicism), education, Irish Home Rule, and progress. Arnold frequently approaches these issues through questions that open the issues and invite the reader's

reflection on them. In order to discuss his rhetorical method and the role Socrates' maxim plays within that method, I use passages from Arnold's chapter "Hebraism and Hellenism," as well as passages from the political arguments he includes throughout the text of Culture and Anarchy.

In chapter five, I explore Arnold's ability to create "representative characters," who seem to be both realistic and stereotypical at the same time. His creation of "representative characters" serves the purpose of distancing his reader from the "real-life" people these characters represent. Since the reader is observing "action" between "characters" in the text, rather than engaging with the author's point of view directly, s/he is more likely to be open to new ideas and perspectives. Arnold's use of representative characters allows him to avoid alienating the reader, while gaining the reader's trust.

CHAPTER 1  
THE TEXT'S GENESIS

Matthew Arnold creates Culture and Anarchy by revising essays he had previously written and published. Each essay that he uses had been published in Cornhill magazine, and the controversial nature of the essays caused many readers to respond with essays of their own. Arnold used the comments and responses he received to help him to form his next argument. After all of the essays had been published individually in Cornhill magazine, he revised them extensively, then published them as Culture and Anarchy. Although Culture and Anarchy is a text that was created from serially published essays, his revisions create a text that gives the reader a single, unified impression.

In order to appreciate the care Arnold takes with the text, it is important to know something about the nature of its serialized parts. The series of articles that first appeared was published under the titles "Culture and Its Enemies" (July 1867) and "Anarchy and Authority" (in five parts: January, February, June, July, and August, 1868). After these articles appeared, Arnold

significantly changed them by deleting large sections that did not fit with his conception of the finished work. The revisions finally resulted in the 1869 edition of the text. Arnold continued to revise the book, and the second edition of the text appeared in 1875 (Brown 17). Between 1875 and 1932, the second edition was the one in common use. Then, in 1932, J.Dover Wilson reintroduced Arnold's first edition:1

But Culture and Anarchy is now a classic; the shrinking flesh flicked on the raw by its original "vivacities" has long been compounded with the dust; and though many of the names and allusions omitted in 1875 are ten times more forgotten in 1931, the rediscovery of them often gives point to Arnold's argument and helps us to understand the mood in which he wrote. (Wilson "Preface" vii)

E.K. Brown's (1935) account of Arnold's revisions of the serialized essays reveals the nature and scope of his changes.2 According to Brown, Arnold makes alterations intended to unify the text. For example, in the first publication of the essay that would later become Culture and Anarchy's first chapter "Sweetness and Light," Brown tells his reader that Arnold retains in the original edition a speech he delivered as Poetry Chair at Oxford. When Arnold begins to pull the essays together to form the text for the book, however, Brown says Arnold makes substantial changes to that speech (18). For example, he deletes a section that refers to a specific time and place:

On this, the last occasion that I am to speak from this place, I have permitted myself, in justifying culture and in enforcing the reasons for it, to keep chiefly on ground where I am at one with the central instinct and sympathy of Oxford. (Brown 18)

He omits references to specific places, such as Oxford, in order to make his text applicable to all places and times. If he had retained this section in Culture and Anarchy, he would have jeopardized the close relationship he builds with his reader, since his reader may not have been at Oxford on that occasion. The specific details he does retain in Culture and Anarchy, such as Bishop Wilson's Maxims and speeches given by the Liberals, are built into the text so that they become part of the experience shared by the narrator with the reader.

Arnold's changes to the 1869 text are also intended to "lighten the burden of posterity" by eliminating specific names:

"Sir William Page Wood" becomes "an experienced and distinguished Chancery Judge"; "Mr. Bright's brother, Mr Jacob Bright" becomes "some more ordinary man"; "Mr Bazley" becomes "our friend" and "our middle-class member of Parliament"; "the Rev. W. Cassel" whose name Arnold learned to be "Cattle" becomes, before Arnold's blood is up, "a Dissenting minister from Walsall" or, "this Walsall gentleman," then "our truculent middle-class Dissenting minister," "our fanatical Protestant." (Brown 27)

Brown notes that although much good writing is "suppressed" when Arnold eliminates passages, the revision is necessary because "Exquisite structure, conducing to an emphatic and distinct total-impression, . . . was for

Matthew Arnold the condition of excellence in poetry and, in truth, in prose as well" (Brown 20). In other words, to Arnold "excellence" is achieved if the whole text affects the reader's thinking, not merely a few individual satires or anecdotes.

For this reason, Arnold suppresses several satirical passages, such as the following, from his revised Culture and Anarchy. In these passages Arnold is using satire to discredit others' opinions, whereas in Culture and Anarchy he prefers to debate with his opponents rather than discredit them. By presenting another person's views in a seemingly fair and straightforward manner, without any satirical tone, he can air their views, or challenge them, either method then acting as a catalyst for the reader's own re-education. If, on the other hand, Arnold had included from his essays passages such as the following summary of Frederic Harrison's manifesto against culture, he would have jeopardized the dialectic he was attempting to create throughout the text:

For example, in that very same powerful manifesto in which Mr Frederic Harrison criticized culture, he spoke of "every hopeful movement being met with the shriek of superstition"; he spoke of the "bigotry of priests and sectaries"; he spoke of the "ancient iniquities unabated"; he spoke of the "men who care for public good wearied out or hunted down." (Brown 21)

His decision to eliminate passages such as those above culminated in a work that develops its argument

slowly, through many turns. As Arnold develops his argument, he is also constantly asking the reader to question many popular moral and political views. Each chapter of the text poses an argument against one or more of those views, such as his questions about the "good" that "machinery" would bring to the people in the face of the peoples' strongly held belief that "machinery" represented progress and therefore a good thing. Arnold's arguments, however, are never straightforward combat; they are circular, anecdotal approaches, intended to encourage the reader to keep reading. This method suggests that Arnold is being true to his self-professed purpose to create a "seed sown in the thoughts of the young and fair-minded, the effect of which will be gradual but persistent" (Letters 2:134).

Brown's examples of Arnold's careful revision and formidable deletions reveal the amount of care and attention Arnold gave to re-making his essays into an entirely new text. From this perspective Park Honan seems guilty of an understatement when, in his biography of Arnold, he summarizes Arnold's revision of the essays into Culture and Anarchy with the following comment: "Gathering up his Cornhill pieces, he published them on Monday, January 25, 1869, as Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism" (Honan 350). Honan's claim that Arnold merely "gather[s] up" the essays ignores

Arnold's commitment to the book and his belief that Culture and Anarchy "would have a considerable effect in the end, and the chapters on Hellenism and Hebraism [being] . . . in the main, . . . so true that they will form a kind of centre for English thought and speculation on matters treated in them" (Letters 2:11).

In his determination to write something that would have a "considerable effect," Arnold seems not to have questioned the usefulness of his method; rather he seems to have been determined to approach the issues contained within Culture and Anarchy in his own way, whether others agreed with his method or not. One who disagreed with his method is his mother, and to her he said on February 3, 1866, that "there are certain things which it needs great dexterity to say in a receivable manner at all, and what I had to say I could only get said, to my thinking, in the manner I have said it" (Letters 1:315).

Arnold's style and expression in Culture and Anarchy seem to have achieved what he intended: they have kept his readers talking and writing about his text. Holloway says that through the "whole experience of reading him" one is able to "sense" Arnold's ability to "mediate" a "habit of mind" which opens possibilities for understanding the world (207). The care he takes seems aimed at providing his reader with endless encouragement to search "inwardly"



for a personal conviction. William Courthope complains, in an essay entitled "Modern Culture (1874) that Arnold:

. . . will not satisfy us. On the contrary, whenever he seems on the point of making a practical suggestion, he shrinks from applying it. (212)

Arnold was probably very pleased by that criticism.

I have examined in this chapter the genesis of Culture and Anarchy, a book that has excited controversy since its publication. The controversy is generally confined to Arnold's political, religious, and social views, and for some critics occasionally extends to Arnold's style. To various degrees, most critics would agree with A.O.J. Cockshut that Arnold was a "brilliant rhetorician" (168) and would agree with Ohmann that Arnold's style was "very different" (308) from Newman's, Carlyle's, and from other Victorians. What is not as frequently discussed is from what source Arnold's writing is primarily influenced.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CONTINENTAL INFLUENCE

In chapter one I explored the evolution of the text; and in the following chapter I will explore the style that Arnold developed for the text, a style that is best discussed within the context of eighteenth-century German developments in prose style.

The German who is central to the changes and developments in prose style in the late eighteenth century is Goethe. One of his greatest contributions to prose style is the Bildungsroman, a form of novel that is partly identified through techniques used to befriend and involve the reader, as well as to represent ideas. These same techniques can be seen working in Culture and Anarchy. It is essential then to appraise Arnold's work within the context not only of Victorian Britain, but also of the revolutionary Goethe, and the development of the Bildungsroman.<sup>3</sup>

Scholarly scrutiny of Goethe's influence on Arnold, to date, focuses on Arnold's affinity with Goethe's philosophy (Simpson, Orrick), and the extent to which Goethe's ideas are important to other writers whom Arnold

also admires, men such as Carlyle or Newman (DeLaura Hebrew 184). Goethe is almost the only German writer to remain popular throughout the nineteenth century and his influence has been pointed out (Ashton 8). Here I briefly explore the revolutionary development Goethe brings about in the narrative structure of the novel, and the influence of that development, as it can be observed in Culture and Anarchy.

By the time Arnold was eighteen, he had read Carlyle's translation of Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and "praised the book's large, liberal view of life" (Honan 68). Within Goethe's liberal view Arnold was able to find a form of expression that allowed him room to grow intellectually. As he grew to be more knowledgeable about other continental writers, such as George Sand, Joubert, Flaubert, and Heine, he was drawn to them as well. The intellectual quality of their writing attracted him, as did its way of involving the reader, encouraging him/her to think. Arnold was aware of the dramatic differences between the structure of prose written in English and that written on the Continent, and this awareness led him at times to be critical of English prose:

How much greater is our nation in poetry than  
prose! how much better, in general, do the  
productions of its spirit show in the qualities  
of genius than in the qualities of intelligence!  
. . . how much more striking, in general, does

any Englishman,--of some vigour of mind, but by no means a poet,--seem in his verse than in his prose! (CWA V3 239)

Arnold admires French and German authors to the extent that his first prose "character," in his "My Countrymen" essays, is Arminius Von Thunder-ten-tronckh, a character drawn, according to R. H. Super, directly from Heinrich Heine: "Heine's doctrine [is] Arminius' doctrine and his style [is] the model for Arnold's irony" (CWA V5 359). Arnold's attachment to things German is evident throughout his work. Immediately prior to the publication of Culture and Anarchy, Arminius is the pre-eminent voice in all of Arnold's essays about "culture" and British lack of "culture." Through the character of Arminius, Arnold could voice his own discontent about British social structures and education: "'Liberalism and despotism!' cried the Prussian; 'let us get beyond these forms and words. What unites and separates people now is Geist.'" (CWA V5 41). By "geist," Arnold means intelligence and the ability to play freely with ideas. Arminius goes on to explain why Germany, with its people's geist, is a superior nation:

We North Germans have worked for Geist in our way, by loving knowledge, by having the best-educated middle and lower class in the world. You see what this has just done for us. France has Geist in her democracy, and Prussia in her education. Where have you got it? --got it as a force I mean, and not only in a few scattered individuals. Your common people is barbarous; in your middle-class "ungeist" is rampant; and as for your aristocracy, you know Geist is

forbidden by nature to flourish in an aristocracy. (CWA V5 41)

Arnold's belief that the British lacked "geist" appears in the essay "I Introduce Arminius and Geist to the British Public" (1866) in Arminius' voice. Later, in Culture and Anarchy, Arnold no longer uses the Arminius persona to voice his discontent with British "culture."

Although Super attributes Arminius' beliefs to Heinrich Heine, Arnold himself says that Heine's "doctrine" evolves directly from Goethe's influence: "Heine is noteworthy, because he is the most important German successor and continuator of Goethe" (CWA V3 108). The flow and direction of Heine's thinking comes from Goethe, and it is Goethe who is central to the revolution in literary style and technique. Furst says it is Goethe who began to exploit fully the use of "implication" within the novel. When something is "implied," "every scrutiny turns into a contemplation" (Furst 23). Implication within Culture and Anarchy works to encourage the reader to reconsider issues and beliefs that have long been accepted as part of the conventional wisdom.

In Simpson's account of Goethe's influence on Arnold, he tells us that "when Matthew Arnold went up to Balliol in October 1841, Goethe was already more than an obscure author" (16). The young Matthew's exposure to Goethe's work was largely due to the Arnolds' frequent Continental houseguests who were aware of emerging philosophical and

literary trends. Later, when Arnold was at Oxford, he read Carlyle's translation of Wilhelm Meister which was the "decisive stimulus in the growth of his interest in Goethe" (Simpson 17). He is so strongly affected by Goethe that he said of him "A greater voice still--the greatest voice of the century--came to us in those youthful years through Carlyle: the voice of Goethe" (CWA V3 108).

Matthew Arnold, during his early years, would have enthusiastically included himself among the Europeans philosophically drawn to the notion of "self-cultivation"; thus it seems reasonable to assume he would also have been drawn to the Bildungsroman. Although the Bildungsroman is generally executed as an apprenticeship novel, complete with a fallible hero, its purpose is to promote self-cultivation or formation within the reader. It is to this same purpose that Arnold forged Culture and Anarchy. He himself accepts the persona of the fallible hero while he urges all men to "the goal--the Socratic "Know thyself" (Shaffner 23). Shaffner explains that Goethe "sought to establish for all men, regardless of class, a new common goal, a new uomo universale, the modern ideal" (23) which would allow for the "development of all natural gifts to the highest level of excellence" (22) These high ideals for all men can be seen throughout Arnold's argument for a different conception of culture.

Goethe's development of the archetypal Bildungsroman, Wilhelm Meister, allows the "struggle" of life to work itself out within each reader's reading of it. But as one of the first novels of its kind, it proved to be a struggle itself for the eighteenth-century reader. Even the response of Goethe's friend, Freidrich Schiller, to a first draft of Wilhelm Meister expresses a certain amount of fear that Goethe's book will be entirely misunderstood because of the way in which it is written. In a letter, he tells Goethe:

In the eighth Book you have dropt various hints of what you wish understood by Apprenticeship and by Mastership. As the purpose of a work of fiction is the main consideration, especially with a public like ours, and is often the only thing afterwards recollected, it is of importance that you be here fully understood. The hints are excellent, only they do not seem to me sufficient. You wish the reader himself to discover more than you directly impart to him. But precisely because you do give out something will it be thought that this is all, and thus you will have limited your idea more than if you had left it entirely to the reader to find out. (Correspondence 164)

Schiller's fear that the reader will gain only what is explicit from the novel arises from its experimental style. He believes that the reader might think that by understanding the story, s/he has understood the book. He feels Goethe's complex strategies will so completely confuse the reader that in the end the reader will have understood the plot, but missed the point of the story. Goethe was not moved by Schiller's fears, however; his

reply to Schiller was "I find a satisfaction in veiling from the world's eyes . . . my writings . . . and thus to place myself . . . between myself and the manifestation of myself" (Correspondence 167). Goethe's strong reply defending his method left open to Schiller only one possible response: "In regard to the Novel, you are right to reject others' views that do not assimilate with your nature" (Correspondence 177).

Arnold is drawn to Goethe's bold, experimental style because his prose is not characterized by the unintellectual "provincialism" (CWA V3 245) that Arnold detested in British prose. He admired Goethe's willingness to take risks. As Goethe pushed against literary convention, Arnold could see that within a changed narrative structure there were possibilities for extracting responses and reactions from readers that previously had been possible only through poetry. Arnold's first response to Goethe's work was to translate the German's ideas into his own journal (1847):

The highest care an author can have for his Public is that he never should bring them what they expect, but what he himself at any given stage of his own growth and that of others, holds to be right and useful. (Simpson 72)

During this period before the writing of Culture and Anarchy, Arnold's poetry often strongly reflected Goethe's style (Buckler, Dawson). By the time that Arnold published Culture and Anarchy in 1869, Goethe was similarly



influencing both Arnold's method and prose style, and as Goethe had earlier recommended, Arnold would seldom give the public what it expected.

Arnold's assimilation of Goethe's Bildungsroman is evident in the strategies within the structure of Culture and Anarchy that treat the reader as a real presence with whom the narrator communicates. For instance, he writes in a conversational style, usually beginning with an anecdote. He attempts to engage the reader in a "play" of good and evil forces which battle all around, while he, as persona, and the reader observe. Arnold writes with the reader "at his side." He does not use "you" which sounds instructional when it is combined with such constructions as "you will" or "you should"; instead, he uses "we." Through these strategies he shows his assimilation of Bildungsroman method. That is, he believes that he and the reader together will experience growth and self-formation when they jointly explore the problems all around them. Although his treatment of politics and religion does not reach the level of abstraction found in Goethe's fiction, Arnold nevertheless employs his variety of complex strategies to achieve a similar level of self-reflective inquiry. Because the text that results from Arnold's strategies is complex, Arnold's reader does often misunderstand the purpose of the text while still

understanding that its subject is the moral and political issues being discussed in the text.

Goethe had also developed the role of the narrator so that it worked within the text in different ways than it had before. Within a novel like Wilhelm Meister, the hero not only acts within the events of the story but also speaks to the reader. Susan Wells describes this as the hero acting as both "subject and object of the narrative" (144). She also tells us that "this dialectical relation structures the novel's basic mode of representation" (144). Within this mode "the novelist repeatedly refers to his relation to the reader and to the life he narrates, installing the reader as his judge" (144).

Within Culture and Anarchy Arnold exploits the relationship between speaker, speaker-as-character, and reader, a relationship which Wells refers to as "dialogic" (143). In other words, Arnold is both the narrator of the text and is also a character within it because, while he at times addresses the reader and directs "us" to turn our attention to some problem, at other times he addresses the arguments of his other characters, answering their charges as though he is talking to them. Through these two methods of dialogue, Arnold communicates with his reader and encourages him/her to feel involved in the text.

Although within the novel the narrative form requires a hero who is able to "show" the reader his life and call

for the reader's judgment, Culture and Anarchy, without such a hero, is nevertheless able with its narrator & (Arnold) to compel the reader's participation and judgment. Instead of showing the reader his own life, Arnold is able to show the reader the reader's experience with political tradition and belief, and call for his reader's judgment of that experience. The narrative "tension" is established by immersing the reader in the decision-making process, and keeping him/her guessing about the purpose.

Further applications of the strategies to the text of the Bildungsroman show that the narrative "tension" is also created through irony. Arnold is able to establish narrative tension through irony by maintaining a level of aesthetic distance. He achieves this distance by making his narrator seem to be a fiction. His narrative control gives the reader a sense that Arnold is not so much telling the reader about what politics in Britain consists, but, as a character within the narrative, is showing the reader the political workings of British society. Through his mastery of the prose narrative form, Arnold controls the "ambiguity" (Furst 13) by showing his reader issues that are familiar, but discussing them in an unfamiliar context, thus creating a sense of ambiguous tentativeness, an "anything can change" tone, within the text. In this context irony is an integral part of the

narrative. It is through irony that the narrator is able to maintain direct control of tone, point of view, and purpose. Arnold's mastery of the use of irony brings together disparate strategies that provide a framework for the essays that comprise Culture and Anarchy and so creates a text that gradually works "to produce a real effect" (Arnold Letters 2:117), or as Brown called it "a total-impression," either phrase signifying that Arnold did not intend for his book to merely be a collation of his essays, but a new text with an aim of its own.

As the Bildungsroman evolved, so too did the public concept of irony. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, literary opinion held that irony was a trope. Even when writing Wilhelm Meister Goethe does not identify irony as his primary device. Also, among other German writers there are varying opinions about the nature of irony. To the Victorians, it is largely undefinable, and undiscussed. Lillian Furst discusses the difficulty of identifying and defining irony:

[t]he more closely one examines irony, the more intractable it proves to be. For its resistance to definition it fully deserves its Ancient Greek connotation of "sly fox" . . . [F]rom whichever angle irony is approached, it is always its elusiveness that emerges as its primary characteristic." (Furst 11)

The perception of irony as a way of seeing, rather than a literary device, grows simultaneously with the development of the Bildungsroman. Furst (Fictions of Romantic Irony)

articulates the questions that have always surrounded irony:

Is Socratic irony, for instance, a means of argumentation or an expression of an ontological vision? Taking it to its utmost extremes, is irony a rhetorical trope, or is it a philosophical stance? The second problem arising out of the notion of the mask concerns communication: if irony is a form of dissembling, how is the listener/reader to perceive it? (7)

The question of the reader's perception within the mask of irony is, to some extent, problematic. Schiller's fear that the reader will misunderstand Goethe's Wilhelm Meister because it is not a "clear" communication is a case in point. Irony is, nevertheless, necessary to the construction of the Bildungsroman because through the development of an ironic distance, the main character is able to step aside to participate with the readers in a judgment of events, and of his/her own actions.

During the eighteenth century, the writers who use irony and expand its role in their narratives do not analyze their use of it. As Furst says, their notion of irony is still linked to its use in poetry:

Schlegel's concept of irony is thus dependent on his theory of Romantic poetry. . . the dialectic of its tensions is to permeate every facet of the aesthetic artifact, shaping its outer and inner configuration, and this dynamic is to act as the propellant for the advance towards transcendence. (Furst 28)

The shaping of "its outer and inner configuration," or Friedrich Schlegel's experimentation with the words and

the form, ultimately leads to changes, in Germany and elsewhere, to the way in which irony is defined. The word "irony" begins to be used to refer to a broad range of strategies that a writer might choose, and so it emerges as something more than a rhetorical trope. Just before Matthew Arnold came into adulthood, Soren Kierkegaard published his Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates (1841), in an attempt to gather up all the different uses of irony and bring them together for discussion. This text evaluates irony's newly perceived importance within literature, and so forms a wonderful source of information about the changes which have evolved within the Bildungsroman. It also provides a useful synthesis of the many notions of irony, from Socrates through Fichte (an eighteenth-century German philosopher).

Kierkegaard found it difficult to synthesize others' perceptions of irony into one coherent concept because references to irony's use were rare. He says of his search for unity within the descriptions of irony that "as one seeks a complete and coherent discussion of this concept, one will soon convince himself that it has a problematic history, or to be more precise, no history at all" (261). He is, nevertheless, sure that within German literature irony is being used in several different ways to encourage the reader to a "reflection on reflection." Primarily Kierkegaard discusses its use to create an ambiguity of

meaning, and a mask. Within each of these uses many devices exist that can produce the desired reflection. He cautions, though, that "as the concept of irony has so often acquired a different meaning, it is essential that one does not come to use it consciously, or unconsciously, in a wholly arbitrary fashion" (262). With this caution in mind then, we should view his Concept as a concretization of eighteenth-century common knowledge about irony, not as an attempt arbitrarily to change its use. As such, it can help to reveal Arnold's knowledge of the use of irony as it evolves within the Bildungsroman: as a "reflection on reflection."

Kierkegaard's exploration of the ironist's ability to free the reader from concrete meaning by creating ambiguity leads him to a strategy that disrupts the reader's sense of what is happening in a text. Kierkegaard says that when aiming to disrupt, the ironist works to separate the reader from a sense of reality by rendering ambiguous what is believable in the story. Kierkegaard defines this as the collapsing of the "actuality," or the ironist's attempt to be "negatively free." By this he means that through metaphor and other figurative language, the ironist is able to play with meaning. He believes that outside of irony, the ironist is limited by the meaning of words:

If I am conscious when I speak that what I say  
is my meaning . . . and I assume that the person

with whom I am speaking comprehends perfectly the meaning . . . then I am bound by what is said. (264)

Through irony, however, the ironist achieves the opposite freedom, a "negative" freedom of not being bound by the limits of definition and syntax. It is within this negative freedom, through connotation and context, that the ironist allows the reader to have a range of comprehension, encouraging him/her to comprehend "figuratively,"--"Although it is understood, it is not directly understood" (265).

For Kierkegaard, irony is also an important dissembler. He maintains that the ironist can "unmask" the reader by making himself appear to share the viewpoint of the reader. In an instance such as this it is the "ironist's pleasure to seem ensnared by the same prejudice imprisoning the other person" (267). In Culture and Anarchy Arnold, as narrator, introduces the reader to his own faults as well as quoting his critic's opinions of his style or behaviour to effect an unmasking. Once he has seemingly acknowledged his place within the prejudices of society, he is able to work himself and the reader away from those prejudices.

According to Kierkegaard's Concept, the ironist is also successful if s/he can produce reader-confusion because it is through confusion that the reader works to make sense of the text, often causing new ideas to emerge



from traditional ones. Irony for Kierkegaard, then, is not a device to "tell," but a concept that has the potential to "reveal." Rather than argue against an idea, the ironist in his/her "negative freedom," blocks the reader's access to conventional thought. Through a guise, metaphor, or stereotype, the ironist encourages the reader to think again. S/He wants the reader to "see" again through a different perspective. The risks the ironist takes with meaning are similar to those the poet takes; thus Arnold makes a work such as Culture and Anarchy as open to interpretation and mis-interpretation as a poem.

For Kierkegaard, the freedom irony gives to the reader as well as the writer of an ironic work has the effect of a "cleansing baptism" (339) that leads to "regeneration" or transformation. The "cleansing baptism" which Kierkegaard believes is the subject and object of irony, can also be found as the subject and object of Arnold's Culture and Anarchy.

Throughout this chapter I have been discussing a route by which Arnold may have assimilated Goethe's strategies well enough for him to have unconsciously adopted them as a part of his style and rhetorical method. In the following chapters I will explore several of the strategies within Culture and Anarchy that are similar to those found within the Bildungsroman.

### CHAPTER 3

#### COURTSHIP AND OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

In chapter two, I explored some of the developments within literature during the eighteenth century that may have combined to influence Arnold, such as the rhetorical strategies and devices of a range of eighteenth-century writers who began to use them to involve the reader in the text in new and interesting ways. Those strategies relied heavily upon the writer's mastery of irony and his/her ability to manipulate the role of the narrator.

In this chapter I will investigate Arnold's development of one of those strategies, courtship (Burke), which is a particular kind of relationship between the narrator in and reader of Culture and Anarchy. Arnold begins building this relationship with the reader in his preface to the chapters. His need to "court" the goodwill of the readers stems from his aim to develop a text that is a dialectic. He elicits that goodwill through the development of a relationship with the reader that relies on the reader's sense that s/he and the writer have common interests and bonds. The reader becomes actively involved in the text because the writer carefully includes the

reader through his/her choice of pronouns, e.g., "our" and "we", and through his/her assumption that the reader has similar fears and goals. Burke says the purpose of the relationship is not to truly befriend the reader but to create the sense of a dialogue between equals from which the dialectic can occur:

The imagery of courtship in the Socratic education is to be interpreted mythically. Its primary motives are not positive, but dialectical. (Burke, Rhetoric, 230)

In Arnold's preface he builds this special relationship with the reader. The reader is invited to join with the narrator in a discussion of some seemingly insignificant issue. Through the discussion, because the reader is being appealed to, s/he is made to feel important. The reader's sense of importance and belonging then affects his/her reading of the text and open-mindedness toward the narrator's raising of controversial topics. This strategy produces a complex balance between the reader as protagonist, and the reader as audience. The reader for Arnold fulfils two roles, s/he acts as the reader of the text, and as a "synecdochic representative" within the text (Burke, Grammar, 507). For this reason the representative reader finds him/herself pulled into the text through reader's and narrator's shared background in Britain's current political upheavals; and Arnold reinforces the perception of sharing further with his use

of "our" and "we" to encourage those associations where they do not naturally form.

From the first sentence of the Preface the reader can observe Arnold creating a relationship with him/her. He chooses a seemingly insignificant "point of departure," a book written by Bishop Wilson, a bishop of Sodor and Man (1663-1755), to engage the reader in a friendly return to the past (Culture 213). He begins the preface with an introduction to Bishop Wilson:

In the essay which follows, the reader will often find Bishop Wilson quoted. To me and to the members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge his name and writings are still, no doubt, familiar. But the world is fast going away from old-fashioned people of his sort, and I learnt with consternation lately from a brilliant and distinguished votary of the natural sciences, that he had never so much as heard of Bishop Wilson, that he imagined me to have invented him . . . In the old times they used to print and spread abroad Bishop Wilson's Maxims of Piety and Christianity. The copy of this work which I use is one of their publications, bearing their imprint, and bound in the well-known brown calf which they made familiar to our childhood. (Preface, 3)

This beginning to Culture and Anarchy disarms the reader's potential rejection of Arnold's concept of "culture," because Arnold does not immediately establish his argument for a concept of "culture." Instead, he surprises the reader by arguing for the importance of Bishop Wilson's Maxims. In this beginning his words are friendly and inviting to the reader. He begins with a recollection of a very "conformist" bishop to create a Socratic engagement

with the reader. Kierkegaard explains this method of beginning as part of the Socratic method: "Socratic method found no phenomenon too insignificant to function as a point of departure for working itself up into a sphere of thought" (Kierkegaard 54). Arnold's method of beginning from some seemingly "insignificant . . . point of departure" is an "organic" planting of a familiar experience which he then nurtures so that it will grow. Buckler explains that Arnold "knew that literature, if it were to work authentically, must work organically, . . . [I]t depended on the very broadest, deepest, most repetitive experience" (Buckler, 5). His intention is to first involve the reader in a story which then takes on elements of the reader's own life, drawing him/her into the story, into the text. While involving the reader in the story in this way, Arnold also helps the reader to recall the past which the narrator insists is common to all of "us": the "well-known brown calf . . . familiar to our childhood." He then pleads for the reprinting of Bishop Wilson's book, and by doing so seems to let the reader decide whether or not the Maxims should be reprinted. The reader is less likely to feel threatened when s/he is in control, so Arnold works to give the reader a sense of some control from the beginning of the preface. A fond relationship with Bishop Wilson is also created by depicting him as an "old-fashioned" person, and

a person from "our childhood." As Arnold asks for Bishop Wilson's book to be reconsidered as a major work, he is introducing the importance of reviewing past action. Reviewing the past and reflecting upon what of it was good or useful becomes, as the text develops, a major objective in his dialectic. Bishop Wilson's role as a figure from the past becomes an anchor to the past as he is recalled several times to remind readers of the good which is inherent in the past, in tradition. Thus Arnold uses Bishop Wilson to foster respect not only for the Bishop as a clerical figurehead, but also, and simultaneously, to foster the reader's respect for tradition. Through this preface Arnold forms an alliance between himself and the reader, in order for the reader to feel that s/he is a friend of the narrator, and is, in a literary sense, inside the text, actively fulfilling a role as a co-conspirator with the narrator.

As Arnold continues in the preface, he works to strengthen the fledgling relationship he is attempting to forge with the reader. To do this he wanders into a discussion of how one should assimilate the values of the Bishop:

They [Bishop Wilson's Maxims] should be read, as Joubert says Nicole should be read, with a direct aim at practice. The reader will leave on one side things which from the change of time and from the changed point of view which the change of time inevitably brings with it, no longer suit him; enough will remain to serve as a sample of the very best, perhaps, which our

nation and race can do in the way of religious writing. (4)

The usefulness and need to savour from the past a "sample of the very best" is an idea that Arnold draws upon, and returns to, several times in the course of Culture and Anarchy. His comment that the Maxims should be read "with a direct aim at practice" encourages his reader to adopt the Maxims, keeping them as a part of our present while regarding them as an immutable part of our past.

Arnold then ends his endorsement of the Bishop's Maxims with the following:

With ardour and unction religion, as we all know, may still be fanatical; with honesty and good sense, it may still be prosaic; and the fruit of honesty and good sense united with ardour and unction is often only a prosaic religion held fanatically. Bishop Wilson's excellence lies in a balance of the four qualities, and in a fulness and perfection of them. (5)

He uses the key words "fanatical," and "balance," here to remind his readers that fanaticism appears not only in religions at the edge of civilization, but also in "prosaic" religions. He uses "perfection," which appears and reappears throughout the text of Culture and Anarchy as a facet of his definition of "culture," in association with Bishop Wilson so that the reader might connect the Bishop and perfection to each other. Later, in his chapter "Hebraism and Hellenism," he develops the links between Hebraism and fanaticism, and Hellenism and perfection.

Throughout the discussion of Bishop Wilson's Maxims, Arnold introduces key words, and a key concept, that of "balance." Since he is also working on his courtship with the reader, he uses the phrase "as we all know" in order to include the reader in the text. His subtext implies that Bishop Wilson is "ours" and "we" are losing him because the modern age no longer pays attention to him or the many good things he has to offer. Arnold's connecting of Bishop Wilson to "us" and the past, combines them--the Bishop, the reader, and the past--so that we understand that "we" are all together, and about to be overtaken by anarchy if we do not embrace culture. The connection between Wilson and Culture becomes even more explicit as, later in the preface, Arnold develops his definition for culture which is, in short, "a harmonious perfection," or the kind of "balance" that dwells within the soul of the Bishop. Throughout Arnold's exhortation for the Maxims of Bishop Wilson, he is also encouraging the reader to care for the Bishop. He makes him seem to be a part of "our" shared past, both the narrator's and the reader's. As the exhortation comes to its conclusion the Bishop's qualities are described with the same words that Arnold later uses to define culture. Arnold, it seems, would like the reader to transfer his/her newly acquired fondness for the Bishop to culture.



As the preface continues and Arnold concludes his exhortation to save the Bishop's Maxims, he moves into another arena that is familiar to his reader: he complains about the Nonconformists. The Nonconformists in this text are Arnold's useful "out-group" ("in-group/out-group polarization" is a concept David Kaufer explains). Arnold works himself into a frenzy of criticism against them, but they are not his true target. It is those who gullibly accept modern "machinery," (Arnold's term for the changes brought by the Industrial Age) who are his target. In order to get their attention, he cleverly chooses to criticize a group of people that most of his target group dislike and distrust. His criticism of this one group enables him to polarize the social and economic groups that comprise society. David Kaufer maintains that "A speaker can affiliate himself with practically any audience if he can identify a common enemy" (101). Although Arnold wants to reach the Nonconformists, in order to change them, he finds in the meantime that they make a perfect "common enemy" whom his other, more gullible Anglican readers can join with him to scorn.

Arnold's first attack on the common enemy, the Nonconformists, whom Kaufer calls the "out-group," begins with his mention of their "antipathy" toward the "established church." Arnold first claims not to be an enemy of the "out-group": "Certainly we are no enemies of

the Nonconformists." But he then shows them to be narrow-minded and rigidly opposed to social and political change. Meanwhile, he ingratiates himself with the "in-group," the established church, by saying that rather than shunning the "out-group" we simply "aim at . . . their perfection"(11). For Anglicans this alignment affirms the connection between Anglicanism and perfection. The several threads that Arnold is weaving begin to make a cloth as he moves through the preface creating a bond between the narrator and reader against the Nonconformist.

Most of Arnold's criticism of the Nonconformist is effected through irony. Arnold seems merely to be interested in improving the Nonconformist, not criticizing him:

So while we praise and esteem the zeal of the Nonconformists in working staunchly by the best light they have, and desire to take no whit from it, we seek to add to this what we call sweetness and light, and to develop their full humanity more perfectly. To seek this is certainly not to be the enemy of the Nonconformist. (11)

At this point Arnold's persona seems sincere and convincing to other established churchmen. They would perhaps all agree that their intention was merely to enlighten the poor, naive Nonconformist. Arnold develops a narrator-persona who bonds himself to the established churchmen through his ability to assume their attitude. He moves between the "enlightened" liberal phrasing, above, and the blunt phrasing of the middle class, below, to bind

his audience together and to him. When he "got tough" with the Nonconformists he said: "The Nonconformist has worshipped his fetish of separatism so long that he is likely to wish still to remain, like Ephraim, 'a wild ass alone by himself.'" As Arnold uses the Nonconformist as the "common enemy," he also works him into a character that plays the role of the "fanatic" who is blind to the light of "perfection."

His in-group, out-group polarization is also effective when he chooses single individuals as representatives of an idea or belief he particularly despises. As a schools inspector Arnold knew very well the ways unscrupulous men and women profited from the system of education. He attacks one of the practices of a specific boarding-house operator who crams as many children as possible into his school, then makes them all buy the same book (one he happens to have published), thereby profiting not only from calling his boarding-house a school and receiving government money for that, but also from the sale of his book. This man, who is well known in government circles because he is also the editor of the Quarterly Review, is for Arnold a good "representative" of what he calls the "machinery" of society.

Dr. William Smith, the learned and distinguished editor of the Quarterly Review, is, as we all know, the compiler of school-books meritorious and many . . . for has not Mr. Oscar Browning\* managed to fire Dr. William Smith (himself, no doubt, the modestest man alive, and never

trained at Eton) with the same spirit, and made him insert in his own Review a puff, so to speak, of his own school-books, declaring that they are (as they are) meritorious and many? (9)

Even though the reader is urged to look upon Dr. Smith as slightly villainous, Arnold maintains the reader as his "confederate," while simultaneously maintaining the admiration of Dr. William Smith himself:

Dr. William Smith, of the Quarterly Review, came up to me a day or two ago with his hand held out, saying he forgave me all I had said about him and the Quarterly, which, he added, was a great deal, for the sake of the truth and usefulness of what I had said about the Nonconformists. (Letters, 2:3)

The effectiveness of Arnold's use of in-group, out-group polarization is evident in his victim's willingness to "forgive" a direct, personal attack because he too feels he is a part of the in-group, as reader/protagonist. The victim of the direct criticism is willing to put aside his own discomfort for the sake of the in-group: the established churchmen.

Arnold's preface weaves threads made from anecdote and criticism to bind the reader to the narrator. His "insignificant point of departure" is Bishop Wilson who, at first, is merely someone who reminds the reader of his safe and secure past. He represents "our childhood," and within the safety of that childhood are the Bishop's Maxims of the established church. With Bishop Wilson, Arnold appeals to the reader's nostalgia and values. He then anchors that courtship by creating an out-group which

can safely be ridiculed. The Nonconformists become a useful common enemy by means of which Arnold can further befriend the reader. Once the reader is in an accepting frame of mind, Arnold is in a position to widen his criticism, at times pointing it back at the reader, without serious risk of losing the reader's allegiance.

Throughout the text of Culture and Anarchy Arnold maintains the relationship with the reader that he has so carefully nurtured in the preface. As he becomes more direct in his criticism of different groups and people within British society, the strain on the relationship increases, causing him to use different strategies. In order to show the difficulty of maintaining a relationship with the reader, I will look at his chapter "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace" where he directly addresses the foibles and shortcomings that exist within each social class. To maintain the relationship with the reader, he uses a strategy, common to the Bildungsroman, of placing his narrator in a vulnerable position. At the beginning of the chapter Arnold introduces a topic, then accepts fault himself for his own limited perspective on the topic: "I have omitted, I find, to complete the old-fashioned analysis which I had the fancy of applying, . . ." and "I will venture to humbly offer myself as an illustration of defect . . ." (99). As narrator he reveals to the reader that he is equal to the reader, and as Gates says: "[h]e

condescends to his readers with a gracious elaborateness" in order to make them "feel they are his equals" (124). He explains to his readers that he too has made mistakes, thereby showing that he is willing to acknowledge his own fault while encouraging the reader to do the same. Though he finds "these confessions . . . bitter and unpleasant" (100), he nevertheless also finds them convenient to use as a "point of departure" for discussing the faults of others. He then passes from himself to the working-class with one of his rare sharp satires:

Perhaps Canning's "Needy Knife-Grinder" (who is dead, and therefore cannot be pained at my taking him for an illustration) may serve to give us the notion of defect in the essential quality of a working class; or I might even cite (since, though he is alive in the flesh, he is dead to all heed of criticism) my poor old poaching friend, Zephaniah Diggs, who, between his hare-snaring and his gin-drinking, has got his powers of sympathy quite dulled and his powers of action in any great movement of his class hopelessly impaired. (100)

Throughout the chapter, Arnold tempers direct criticism, such as that of "Needy Knife-Grinder" by returning to his own faults, and the faults of the Nonconformists. He maintains that he is a member of a group just like everyone else, then creates another group outside the ones he criticizes, for himself and his readers to find refuge in. This group he calls the "aliens" because they do not fit the stereotypes of the other groups, and he makes it clear that this group has fewer faults to mend:

. . . [W]hen we speak of ourselves as divided into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, we must be understood always to imply that within each of these classes there are a certain number of aliens . . . persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general humane spirit. (109)

Through having a "humane" spirit, the reader happily escapes the mechanistically motivated "Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace." Arnold then begins to shape the chapter as a conversation so that the reader can believe he/she is, like Arnold, a "humane spirit." When he says: "But I remember once conversing with a company of Nonconformist admirers of some lecturer . . ." (111), he embraces the reader with a jovial and informal story of the kind the reader would encounter in a social setting. The Nonconformist is not satirized; satire would not serve Arnold's purpose because it would be too easy. Arnold's readers are accustomed to reading satiric vignettes about the Nonconformists; they are not, however, accustomed to having the Nonconformists discussed as well-meaning but errant children. Arnold hopes that the reader is interested in his confidential anecdotes, and is eagerly awaiting the next one, rather than taking umbrage at his assessment of the reader himself, or the group to which s/he belongs.

Toward the end of the chapter Arnold continues to hold the reader close to him through his use of "we." Each time he makes a point that he hopes will have a

profound effect on the reader, he "speaks" as though "we" were all in agreement already. For instance, at the end of "Barbarian" he uses "we" to bring "us" all to a common recognition of what "we" believe before "go[ing] a little deeper":

We see, then, how indispensable to that human perfection which we seek is, in the opinion of good judges, some public recognition and establishment of our best self, or right reason . . . But now let us try to go a little deeper, and to find, beneath our actual habits and practice, the very ground and cause out of which they spring. (128)

Arnold's conciliatory concluding paragraph to this chapter, which criticizes England's "three great classes," exemplifies not only Arnold's careful "courtship" of the reader, but also the purpose for which the "courtship" is effected--to encourage a re-education of the reader, to find "beneath our actual habits" what forces create those habits.

As Arnold moves through the chapter gathering up the reader and moving him/her along the ever more confusing road to "perfection," his involvement with the reader as a co-conspirator, friend, and confederate is easy to identify. Arnold understands that when he speaks he does not dare alienate. He is speaking to people who would respond; and, because their response is important to him, he respects their sense of who they are, and their acquired beliefs. For this reason, Arnold uses what Kenneth Burke has labelled a "courtship" relationship



with the audience. He is ever near to the reader/protagonist who is courted by the text and so may be transformed by it.

Through Arnold's intricately structured text he is able to draw on a wide range of human emotions. It is not simply that the reader laughs along with Arnold at others, or that through Arnold's criticisms the reader receives wisdom. The narrator and reader share a relationship that includes laughter and criticism. The relationship changes and grows just as the text does.

As I have shown, from the preface, the groundwork is laid for this relationship. Arnold begins by discussing the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge" and through this discussion is quickly brought into the text as Arnold recalls memories of "our childhood." With this disarming preface the reader has lost his/her supposed function as reader-critic and becomes reader-protagonist. Arnold absorbs the reader in a "courtship," and the reader's response is a series of negotiations with Arnold's method. The narrator's words provoke response, or "mental" actions, in the reader:

Actions [have] to be seen as the progressive dialectical unfolding of something, Geist, so that the knower and known might share a common ground of identity. (Altieri 239)

By building a common ground from bits of shared background and a common desire, Arnold hopes to create a more civilized and intelligent society, that springs from a

new-found geist within his reader. The geist he believes he can reach is the intertwined tradition and experience of the British people who, he feels, are held back from geist because they are inculcated with a narrow, Hebraistic dogma.

Arnold's interest, in Culture and Anarchy, is that his style create a dialectic that can "transform" the reader's ideas. What they might be transformed into, however, Arnold cannot control. Kenneth Allott says that Arnold's "disinterested" stance allows him to have success with what truly is of interest to him:

If a "strategy of disinterestedness" exists in Arnold's wish to speak calmly and without rancour, the wish is in no sense Jesuitical: it stands both for the respect with which the writer approaches the truth and for the power of his writings to charm an audience. (27)

Although for Arnold there is a truth as he believes it to be, he also knows that he cannot guarantee that a reader will arrive at that same truth. He does believe that his approach will enable the reader to use "right reason," and through it will ultimately arrive at truth.

Throughout the dialectical "courtship," and the other relationships explored in this chapter, Arnold uses his rhetorical skill to perform the difficult task of engaging the reader, and holding his/her allegiance, while subtly questioning many of the reader's values.

## CHAPTER 4

### STRATEGIES AND SOCRATES

In chapter three I explored Arnold's development of a close relationship with his reader. His criticism of political groups and people is at times so pointed that the relationship he develops in his preface, and maintains throughout, is necessary to keep the reader friendly toward the writer's views. It is his method for saying what he has to say without alienating his reader. The rhetorical strategies that Arnold uses are what Burke calls a "courtship." This strategy, along with Arnold's manipulation of the narrator's role sometimes as a commentator, and sometimes as an actor who simultaneously comments on his faults, is meant to keep the reader alert to the text and the play of ideas Arnold is encouraging. The seeming lack of structure encourages the reader to make decisions about issues based on his/her own thinking, rather than decisions based on others' thinking.

In chapter four I will explore the methods Arnold uses to encourage independent thought. One of those methods is Socrates' maxim "Know thyself," which he uses as a significant point of departure in two ways: first, he

uses the maxim as both a guide and warning to the reader, and second, he emphasizes both "knowing" and "thyself." As a "guide" the maxim can be seen as a reminder to the reader that, above all else, one must first "know" for oneself before one should heed the knowledge of others. The maxim implies that all external "fact" is useful only after one's self-knowledge is established. As a warning, "Know thyself" implies that, if one does not seek self-cultivation--or self-knowledge--one will easily be led astray by others. Although "Know thyself" is referred to explicitly only in Culture and Anarchy's introduction, nonetheless it is a significant maxim within the text.

Arnold attempts to guide his reader to know for him/herself whether some issue, or prejudice, is "true." He calls attention to his reader's prejudices, which he believes are the cause of the social and religious tensions within society, to show his readers that the prejudice caused by blindly following the leadership of others diminishes "truth." As a warning, "Know thyself" reminds his readers that they will be harmed by following those who personally gain from exploiting the existing differences between people. To help his readers recognize when others are manipulating the public's prejudice, Arnold attempts to show how prejudice and mis-apprehension of basic information can be manipulated for the purpose of being divisive. If Arnold is successful, the reader's

reconsideration of his/her own bias brings the reader to a new knowledge of him/herself. "Know thyself" is his central purpose because it directs the reader to follow only his/her own knowledge, and to know from within oneself the basis for that knowledge.

The admonition to "Know thyself," then, is the "little deeper" Arnold means his reader to go "beneath [his/her] actual habits and practice" (128). As he exposes layers of prejudice and belief for examination he causes the reader to participate in judging, reflecting, and coming to know. As the reader struggles with Arnold's review of past political and religious actions, s/he is also struggling to recreate a personal "truth." A dialectical tension results from the pull of opposing beliefs, and the reader must renegotiate the "truth" of the beliefs in order to ease the tension.

We can explore this strategy of Arnold's in his introduction when he uses the words of John Bright, an elected politician, and Frederic Harrison, a frequent contributor to the periodic press, to evoke the popular understanding of culture, and then challenges that understanding. In the introduction Arnold uses two familiar characters to create the tension between his evolving concept of culture and what the public believes culture to be. He calls Bright "that fine speaker and

famous Liberal" but depicts Bright as being neither "fine" nor "bright" in his thoughts and words:

In one of his speeches a short time ago, that fine speaker and famous Liberal, Mr. Bright, took occasion to have a fling at the friends and preachers of culture. "People who talk about what they call culture!" said he contemptuously; "by which they mean a smattering of the two dead languages of Greek and Latin." And he went on to remark, in a strain with which modern speakers and writers have made us very familiar, how poor a thing this culture is, how little good it can do to the world, and how absurd it is for its possessors to set much store by it. And the other day a younger Liberal than Mr. Bright, one of a school whose mission it is to bring into order and system that body of truth with which the earlier Liberals merely fumbled, a member of the University of Oxford, and a very clever writer, Mr. Frederic Harrison, developed, . . . the thesis which Mr. Bright had propounded in only general terms. (39)

As well as calling Bright's wisdom and his notion of culture into question, Arnold shows that Harrison is a disciple of Bright's. The two are brought together in this way in much of the text, until it becomes nearly automatic to think of them as one.

Later in his introduction, Arnold tells the reader he does not mean culture to be confused with power. To Bright and Harrison power and culture mean the same thing and "those popular Liberals" who speak against culture have convinced the public that what Arnold means by culture is the careful control of public freedom and power by academic scholars, the ones who know a "smattering of . . . Greek and Latin." Arnold seeks to change this

concept of culture first by stating his own position within the introduction:

Now for my part I do not wish to see men of culture asking to be entrusted with power; and, indeed, I have freely said, that in my opinion the speech most proper, at present, for a man of culture to make to a body of his fellow-countrymen who get him into a committee-room, is Socrates's: Know Thyself! and this is not a speech to be made by men wanting to be entrusted with power. (40)

He sets Bright and Harrison, the "fellow-countrymen who [would want to] get him into a committee-room," against Socrates, in a sense pitting the Hebraists (Bright and Harrison) against the Hellenist. As is typical of Arnold, he tells the reader nothing specific in this except "Know thyself." His goal with Bright and Harrison seems to be to show their lack of logic, while reminding his reader that what is important is to know for oneself. Arnold uses the words of Bright and Harrison throughout Culture and Anarchy as I will show in my next chapter when I explore Arnold's use of representative characters.

His use of Socrates' maxim "Know thyself" is subtly implied throughout the text. He situates the maxim within a dialectical context in his chapter "Hebraism and Hellenism," which reflects many of the most prominent political and religious prejudices of his day. In this chapter he raises delicate and charged issues and opens them for re-examination with what Buckler calls his "marvellous nimbleness." He feels this chapter is

important because he believes its subject matter is "so true that . . . [it] will form a kind of centre for English thought and speculation . . ." (Letters 2:11). He begins the chapter by going "back for a moment to Bishop Wilson" (129). This circling back is his rhetorical touchstone. It is a chance for the reader to review and revise assumptions formed in an effort to "know" him/herself. Arnold invites the reader to share this process of revision as he states: "we find ourselves opening up a number of large questions on every side" (129). He then enters into a discussion of the accepted beliefs about and attitudes toward Hebraism and Hellenism in order to cause new speculation, to assist "the individual to an intellectual delivery [by] sever[ing] the umbilical cord of substantiality" (Kierkegaard 215). In other words, in order to re-create "truth," Arnold attempts to cut the reader away from what s/he accepts unquestioningly as "truth." He achieves this by bringing into confrontation the underlying belief systems of both Hebraism and Hellenism:

The final aim of both Hellenism and Hebraism, as of all great spiritual disciplines, is no doubt the same: man's perfection or salvation. The very language which they both of them use in schooling us to reach this aim is often identical. (130)

The reader is justified if s/he is surprised by Arnold's treatment of the two belief systems. The equality he affords to Hebraism and Hellenism is a departure from what



the nineteenth-century public commonly believes to be his position.

As Arnold begins his discussion of Hebraism and Hellenism, he firsts reminds his reader of Bishop Wilson. Arnold then presents his view that although as a nation "we" have "energy and persistence in walking according to the best light we have" (129), we are often "not careful enough . . . to see that our light be not darkness" (129). As the chapter develops, Arnold works at this notion until he has nearly stated that what he means is that the "Light" of Hebraism is in fact "Darkness."

At the beginning of the chapter, however, he is never so explicit about his views, and first leads the reader to believe that the apparent difference between Hebraism and Hellenism is, in fact, merely the manufacture of man: "And these two forces we may regard as in some sense rivals, --rivals not by the necessity of their own nature, but as exhibited in man and his history" (129). He continues to argue that the two forces are really two versions of the same force by placing the two side-by-side and stating that the driving force behind each is knowledge, in a Socratic sense. Arnold's argument cannot however be dismissed as purely manipulation in order to convince the reader of his own view; in fact he does not offer a view. Instead, he offers a different perspective and cautions the reader to "Know thyself" in a way that is typical of

the Bildungsroman. He does this first by cautioning his reader to be aware of others' arguments:

When the two [Hebraism and Hellenism] are confronted, as they very often are confronted, it is nearly always with what I may call a rhetorical purpose; the speaker's whole design is to exalt and enthrone one of the two, and he uses the other only as a foil and to enable him the better to give effect to his purpose. (130)

He follows this with an ironic aside that brings the reader back into his circle with his use of "us": "Obviously, with us, it is usually Hellenism which is thus reduced to minister to the triumph of Hebraism" (130). He wants him/her to know that the popular attitude toward Hellenism is rhetorically manipulated. He reminds his reader of the "rhetorical purpose" within speech and writing, hoping to stimulate him/her to question whether his/her attitude toward Hellenism has been manipulated. Arnold's method is found within Kierkegaard's concept of a writer's ability to change what everyone believes is true (Kierkegaard 237). Kierkegaard's term for what society makes into fact is the "actuality." He says that what the ironist attempts to do through irony is "negate" the "actuality," or call into question what people have come to assume are facts. Arnold's calling socially created assumptions into question and his encouragement of self-discovered assumptions is his attempt to change the actuality. Arnold hopes the new actuality will represent a balance between Hebraism and Hellenism.

The balance that Arnold believes should exist between Hebraism and Hellenism is the "harmonious" part of the "perfection" that he thinks culture exemplifies. The two impulses, one toward Hebraism, the other toward Hellenism, diverge because of perceptions and movements within society:

Language may be abundantly quoted from both Hellenism and Hebraism to make it seem the one follows the same current as the other towards the same goal. They are, truly, borne towards the same goal; but the currents which bear them are infinitely different. (133)

These "currents" are whatever Arnold's reader decides to make them. Arnold is never explicit but leaves open the way to one's own understanding.

Even though Arnold may have strong preferences for Hellenism, his emphasis remains on the similarities between Hellenism and Hebraism, not the differences, and this encourages the reader to reassess his/her beliefs. It is Arnold's seemingly disinterested, dispassionate "discussion" that allows the reader an opportunity for that reassessment of an assumed "actuality." Arnold's stance does not force the reader to defend his/her former notions about Hellenism, and his confidential tone treats the reader as a "confederate," whether the reader is predisposed to agree with Arnold or not. This situation obtains at least until Arnold works his way through his history lesson to the Fall of Hellenism:

Apparently it was the Hellenic conception of human nature which was unsound, for the world could not live by it. Absolutely to call it unsound, however, is to fall into the common error of its Hebraising enemies; but it was unsound at that particular moment of man's development, it was premature. (136)

Here again he raises two thoughts for the reader: the one that the rivalry between Hebraism and Hellenism is a manufacture of man, and the other, only barely hinted at, that Hellenism is the sounder of the two. The reader is urged to think about the "Hebraising enemies" and the general public's conception of the godlessness of Hellenism. In order for Arnold to stimulate the reader's desire to question his/her long held beliefs about the non-Christian ideology represented by Hellenism, he knows he must tread rhetorically. The balance between Hebraism and Hellenism now becomes something more abstract. Arnold knows his reader is prejudiced in favour of Hebraism, just as Arnold himself is prejudiced in favour of Hellenism. The struggle for a balanced view of the two resides in the struggle of ideas between the narrator and reader. In other words, the balance, if one occurs, occurs outside the text, where Arnold's particular presentation of ideas dislodges some of the reader's prejudice, urging him/her one way, while s/he resists the new ideas and pulls back toward his/her original position.

After Arnold records the Fall of Hellenism in his history lesson, he then interrupts his more distanced tone

and replaces it briefly with a dramatically oratorical tone, one reminiscent of a minister's exhortation:

To a world stricken with moral enervation Christianity offered its spectacle of an inspired self-sacrifice; to men who refused themselves nothing, it showed one who refused himself everything; --"my Saviour banished joy!" says George Herbert. When the alma Venus, the life-giving and joy-giving power of nature, so fondly cherished by the pagan world, could not save her followers from self-dissatisfaction and ennui, the severe words of the apostle came bracingly and refreshingly: "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things, cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (137)

"Let no man deceive you with vain words," is Arnold's Hebraistic way of reminding his reader to "Know thyself," Hellenistically. The oratorical quality of Herbert's emphasized cry, as well as the apostle's warning, raises this passage of Arnold's from its usually engaging but witty form to one that is far more dramatic. Arnold implies it is a weak moment in the world that allows Christianity to sneak in, and dazzle man with its "spectacle of . . . inspired self-sacrifice." His word choice belies any true faith in Hebraism the reader might attribute to him. As well he says that through its embrace of Christianity, the world learns fear and obedience. It is the obedience that Hebraism demands which Arnold feels keeps the world in the dark and on its knees. Obedience, in Arnold's view, requires a mindless adherence to rules, and it is to this that he so strongly objects: ". . . of

the two disciplines laying their main stress [Hebraism and Hellenism], the one, on clear intelligence, the other, on firm obedience" (137). It is in statements such as this that Arnold's preservation of a balance between Hebraism and Hellenism wavers because he maintains that Hellenism's stress is on "clear intelligence," a superior function in Arnold's way of thinking to Hebraism's "firm obedience."

Arnold's apparent recognition that he has possibly sprung the dialectical tension through his exhortation makes him once again change tone and rhythm, back to the more distanced, academic language that he had used earlier in the chapter:

Hebraism and Hellenism are, neither of them, the law of human development, as their admirers are prone to make them; they are, each of them, contributions to human development,--august contributions, invaluable contributions; and each showing itself to us more august, more invaluable, more preponderant over the other, according to the moment in which we take them, and the relation in which we stand to them.  
(138)

Through his balancing of these two great forces as equal contributions to mankind, he attacks the notion that any type of obedience, or any vengefulness toward another because of his/her obedience is unnecessary to the furthering of "human development." He again urges his reader to balance the two contrary forces of Hebraism and Hellenism in order to come to "know" where s/he is. He manages to open an emotional subject, that of one's belief and religious preference, while avoiding a confrontation

with the reader and, ultimately, avoiding the reader's rejection of the process of coming to "Know [him/her]self."

Though at the beginning of the chapter Arnold is talking about historical classicism, he uses Bishop Wilson to introduce that subject, making the bishop his "speculative starting-point." He quotes Bishop Wilson's words: "'First, never go against the best light you have; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness'" (129). Thus he reminds his reader to beware of the source of his/her own "light" when considering the value of both Hebraism and Hellenism. With Bishop Wilson's caution in the reader's mind, he then asks his reader to reconsider "culture" and "Hellenism" through his/her own "best light" to find a way to the "truth." He wants his reader to consider carefully whether s/he has, in fact, used his/her own "best light," or whether their "light" is in truth "darkness." Throughout his discussion Arnold manipulates the reader's beliefs about and impressions of Hebraism and Hellenism to confuse the reader and, through this process, immerse the reader in the dialectic. The truth is no longer within easy reach. Arnold hopes this Socratic technique will be an aid to the "process of transformation whereby the [reader's] position at the end transcends his position at the start, so that the position at the start

can eventually be seen in terms of the new motivation encountered en route" (Burke, Grammar, 422).

Toward the end of this chapter, Arnold, in his "courtship" style, again includes the reader as a partner in what "we" know. Arnold involves the reader in an examination of the "single great idea" of "immortality." His open criticism of St. Paul, for example, illustrates his confidence at this point in the text in questioning Hebraistic notions:

Perhaps we may help ourselves to see this clearer by an illustration drawn from the treatment of a single great idea which has profoundly engaged the human spirit, and has given it eminent opportunities for showing its nobleness and energy. It surely must be perceived that the idea of immortality, as this idea rises in its generality before the human spirit, is something grander, truer, and more satisfying than it is in the particular forms by which St. Paul . . . endeavour[s] to develop and establish it. Surely we cannot but feel that the argumentation with which the Hebrew apostle goes about to expound this great idea is, after all, confused and inconclusive. (139)

Arnold believes that his reader, who is part of the "we," would agree that St. Paul is "confused and inconclusive" since the reader now understands that there is some reason to question what "we" once simply followed. He encourages an intellectual growth in his reader that might assist the reader to differentiate fact from popular notions. He works to help his reader know that the confusion of the Industrial Age and all of its attendant change would not be halted, reversed, or cured by "blind obedience" to



Hebraism. He reminds his readers that to gain the control and reason that the Age requires can occur only if "we" see the interconnection of history, religion, and intellect:

In all directions our habitual courses of action seem to be losing efficaciousness, credit, and control, both with others and even with ourselves; everywhere we see the beginnings of confusion, and we want a clue to some sound order and authority. This we can only get by going back upon the actual instincts and forces which rule our life, seeing them as they really are, connecting them with other instincts and forces, and enlarging our whole view and rule of life. (144)

Arnold's comment on the senselessness of obedience is, rhetorically, a most fitting way to end his dialectically challenging chapter "Hebraism and Hellenism." His presentation does not attack or victimize the reader; therefore, the reader is not forced into a defensive stance. He ably provides alternatives to Hebraism, without "raising his voice." His method, one which he defends as the only one he feels will "work," is rich in its sense of the reader and its efforts to include the reader so that s/he will come to "Know" him/herself.

Arnold uses a similar path of dialectical tension to establish the potential for the reader's re-vision of his/her concept of "culture." In Culture and Anarchy the two opposing realities, "culture" and/or "anarchy," do not meet toe-to-toe. Instead, they confront each other through two of Arnold's other familiar terms, "perfection"

and "machinery," both found within the chapter Arnold entitled "Sweetness and Light." For Arnold, "perfection . . . moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good" (45). By having introduced "perfection" as the essence of "culture," Arnold turns again to Bishop Wilson to unite "culture" to the dominant Hebraistic values in society. Arnold tells his reader that Bishop Wilson could supply the motto for "culture," or "perfection," with his words "To make reason and the will of God prevail!" (45) He does not say that Bishop Wilson says "this is what culture does"; rather, he implies the Bishop would agree that "culture" does combine "reason and the will of God," thus uniting Hebraism and Hellenism once again. Arnold himself continues in this vein stating that "culture . . . demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God" (45). With Bishop Wilson's "blessing," then, Arnold unites Hebraism and Hellenism under the yoke of culture.

As Arnold reiterates his thesis that culture is something larger than the academic love for books and an aristocratic assumption of one's importance that Mr. Bright and Mr. Harrison lead everyone to believe it is, he continues with his discussion of culture's dialectical opposite, which is anarchy. The discussion of anarchy occurs solely in the chapter Arnold entitled "Sweetness

and Light." He tells his reader that since "we" all know "that culture, instead of being . . . frivolous and useless . . . has a very important function to fulfil . . ." (48), "we" can turn our attention to culture's antithesis: "anarchy." Arnold uses the term "machinery" to create a more tangible, physical reality for the abstract term "anarchy." He says that "machinery," because it has no soul or spiritual centre, led society astray. He raises his argument by listing most of the possessions and attitudes held dear by the majority of nineteenth-century individuals:

What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? . . . what are, even, religious organisations but machinery? (50)

The list, in litany style, brings before people's eyes the tools of a spiritually lost society. Arnold cautions that when "things" became goals or ends in and of themselves, society loses its purpose. He believes that the glorification of coal, for instance, leads to anarchy because:

Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what is greatness? --culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration. (51)

Arnold reminds his readers that England was great before coal, and that having coal has not created greatness.

Greatness, he contends, is a "harmonious perfection," which he equates with culture. "The idea of perfection as an inward condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilisation in esteem with us" (49). His casting of "machinery" in a perhaps anarchical role of evil confuses his Victorian readers, who are, for the most part, enamoured of the Industrial Age. His readers' confusion flows from the love they have come to have for things mechanical. He attempts to show that the love of "machinery" is creating a world in which "having something" supersedes any "inward conditions of the mind and spirit" (48). To Arnold, this almost inevitably leads to anarchy because society has lost its spiritual standard. He wants his readers to re-appraise the importance of having wealth, coal, and machinery as goals in and of themselves. In this sense, culture and anarchy becomes society's either/or struggle, as England moves inexorably toward its future.

In some senses, Arnold's appeal through these pages in "Sweetness and Light" is directly oratorical. He exhorts the reader to move toward an appreciation of the "inward condition" of "perfection" that is culture. His choice of "perfection" as the defining term for culture, is a dialectical one, however, which urges the reader to reconsider culture as something other than an inherent predisposition of the aristocracy. Before he begins the

discussion of definitions for culture and machinery, he opens his chapter with the very problem of connotation. He uses the word "curiosity" as his example: "The disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity" (43). He launches into a discussion of the problem the English have with "curiosity" because they view the term "always . . . in a somewhat disapproving sense." He feels the word "conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity." Arnold discusses the English notion of the word "curiosity" at great length, and chides the English for being unable to see the two senses of the word, one good and one bad, that Europeans do. When Arnold uses the word "curiosity," he emphasizes the benefit of having a questioning attitude:

For as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity,--a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are, --which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable.(44)

His explanation that there is pleasure in intellectual discovery reinforces his argument for the importance of allowing at least "two senses" to exist in the definition of "culture." He says "But there is of culture another view," and hopes the reader resists the single-sighted English habit of eliminating all but the one, prevalent view of culture as a synonym of "selfish ease." He encourages the reader to allow for other definitions that

give to culture a wider meaning, which includes intellectual development. In these ways, Arnold works to keep the dialectical tension of his text continually challenging to the reader in order to keep the reader moving toward a "transformation" to "know" him/herself.

The "delicate" and "tentative" qualities that William Buckler saw in Culture and Anarchy are evident in Arnold's use of terms such as, "perfection," "sweetness," or "culture," which Arnold purposely leaves undefined because he wants to preserve their flexible connotations, just as he strives to preserve a flexible connotation for the word "curiosity." Once the reader absorbs a sense of Arnold's multiple connotations of the word "perfection," or the converging elements within the terms "Hebraism" and "Hellenism," s/he is really left to create a personal definition. Arnold's desire for his ideas to be debated leads him to write a text that is more than his platform for reform, or even a severe criticism of his society. Instead, it is a text that causes the reader to question. It is also one that is tentative in its recreation of civilized interaction, making its presentational method in many ways similar to Goethe's Bildungsroman. Arnold's desire to write about politics, education, and religion in a manner that is "receivable" leads him to use his poetic creativity to write "delicate, tentative, and

fluid" prose, making it more nearly literature than polemic.

When Arnold uses rhetorical devices such as those I have examined in this chapter, he is creating a dialectic: a discussion between opposing views. Arnold's knowledge of Goethe's style and philosophy affects his own writing so that we are able to observe his rhetorical strategies and explore his method of creating this dialectic. He uses Socrates' maxim "Know thyself" to encourage the reader to come to his/her own conclusions about social and political issues. Within his creation of a dialectical text, his use of irony as the placing of any idea in opposition to itself gives his readers an opportunity to reconsider "truth" without being told the path to follow in their reconsideration. When Arnold places ideas such as Hebraism and Hellenism in opposition to each other, then conflates them, he is imagining a "common ground where [these] two ideas might do battle" (Burke, Grammar, 33), leaving the reader to decide who and what has won. Because of his complex dialectic, Arnold is able to "avoid merely substituting one routine, unimaginative way of seeing one's life . . . for another . . ." (Buckler 75).

Whether Arnold is conflating "Hebraism and Hellenism" or mapping the distinction between perfection and machinery, he is always comparing, or offering, two opposites for consideration. He asks the reader to

indicate where the line of "truth" falls between them. In this way, he involves the reader in the formation of his/her own understanding, and encourages the reader to "Know thyself," through the method of the dialectic.

In this chapter, I have chosen the greatest ideological differences, those of "Hebraism and Hellenism" and "culture and anarchy," to explore Arnold's rhetorical use of Socrates' maxim "Know thyself." Arnold uses the maxim to compel the reader to reconsider his/her own "truth" located between opposing forces.



## CHAPTER 5

### REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTERS

In chapter four I explored Arnold's rhetorical use of Socrates' maxim "Know thyself" as a dialectical tool in his chapter "Hebraism and Hellenism," and in his general development of a context for his terms "culture" and "anarchy." His rhetorical strategy in these instances, as in his courtship, is to involve the reader and engage him/her in a self-formative process, a process similar to that of Goethe's Bildungsroman.

In this chapter, I will explore another strategy often found within the Bildungsroman, the development of what Susan Wells calls a "representative character." In chapter four, I discussed John Bright and Frederic Harrison's role in the introduction to Culture and Anarchy as Arnold's attempt to bring the reader to a position of reconsideration of these men's ideas. In this chapter I will focus on their usefulness as "representative characters" within the dialectic. I will also explore Arnold's use of representative groups and terms.

Representative characters are for the most part used as examples of a group's or society's thinking or

behaviour. Arnold uses representative characters to bring together typical ideas and behaviours in order to encourage intellectual reflection. I have shown in an earlier chapter his ability to form alliances across groups with his "in-group/out-group" technique. I have also shown his ability to stereotype behaviours with characters such as "Needy Knife-Grinder." In addition to his use of representation in these areas, he is also able to create characters or characteristic groups, whose ideas and behaviours seem truly, believably "typical" (Wells) rather than "flat" reductions of what they represent, through combining what they have written themselves in articles or letters with his descriptive preambles to their words.

Arnold uses the names and words of politicians and clerics in Culture and Anarchy, but creates roles for them to play by choosing from what they have written or publicly stated. He then re-presents them through their words, but in an order and form that are unfamiliar to the public. The effect is that nineteenth-century readers recognized the familiar political and religious representatives Arnold uses, but often did not identify with what these representatives said--at least not in the way their statements appear in Culture and Anarchy. Through these representations, Arnold causes the reader to have misgivings about these "important" individuals,

thereby causing some tension between his/her previous approval of the figure, and the new doubts created from reading Culture and Anarchy. This manipulation of the dialectical tension helps to keep the reader involved, and thinking, as s/he processes the information in the text.

Arnold is not always satirical with his representation. He does not always intend to victimize the figure. He works, as will be seen, to encourage in the reader a curiosity about these political men that would develop into a reconsideration of the reader's mechanistic faith in them as political or spiritual leaders. The representation of his contemporaries, John Bright, a popular Liberal politician, and Frederic Harrison, an essayist and philosopher, for instance, is flexible in the sense that Arnold seems to have some admiration for the men at the same time that he seems to be criticizing them. Kierkegaard explains that this flexible approach is a necessary ambivalence for the ironist:

Either the ironist identifies with the nuisance he wishes to attack, or he enters into a relation of opposition to it, but in such a way, of course, that he is always conscious that his appearance is the opposite of what he himself subscribes to, and that he experiences a satisfaction in this disparity. (Kierkegaard 266)

Although he never identifies with Bright, he often appears to be praising him. He frequently quotes Bright and Harrison, but manipulates their words to serve his

purposes. Martha Vogeler, Harrison's biographer, explains that Arnold's use of well-known individuals:

has additional interest to students of literature because Arnold embodied much of his criticism of England in lively sketches of his contemporaries, thus conveying a sense of the diversity and energy of the Victorian scene such as we get from a novel by Dickens. But like the minor characters in Dickens' novels, these portraits are caricatures; Arnold summed up an individual's beliefs in a phrase or two, often a quotation from one of his speeches or publications. (Vogeler "Arnold and Harrison" 441)

Vogeler's view that Arnold merely creates flat, undeveloped caricatures for a satiric effect is not supportable if one observes his technique carefully. Arnold does not want his summing-up of an individual to read as though it were a caricature; instead he wants the portrait to seem real. In order to do this he attempts to re-present to his readers those individuals whom society has already, in a sense, "caricatured." In other words, the public's perception of John Bright is that he is a progresssive Liberal whose vision is clearly set on the future and whose ability to lead is unquestioned. Any member of society who disagrees with Bright is thought to be an enemy of progressive thinking. Arnold fights this political "caricature" of John Bright, with his own "caricature" of him. He re-presents John Bright, using Bright's own words, in quite another way, as a mechanistic thinker whose only utterances are those of the "political

cant" of the day. Arnold uses Bright's statements about education, politics, and Home Rule in Ireland to form the representative political voice that supports everything modern:

[Arnold asserts that]Mr. Bright, who has taken lately to representing himself as, above all, a promoter of reason and of the simple natural truth of things" asserts that "not only have the United States thus informed Europe, but they have done it without a great apparatus of higher and scientific instruction." (17)

Bright's support for fewer institutions of higher education and more mass education at the primary levels, as he perceived was the situation in the United States, is a political position that pleases the middle and upper classes (Bantock). Arnold desperately wants people to reconsider Bright's argument for this cause. Bright's support for mass education for young children is, Arnold knows, a politically expedient support that keeps the middle and upper classes happy. They can afford to send their own children to private schools and they believe the only need the working and lower classes have for education is as a place for young children to be looked after while their parents work in a factory, as well as a place where slightly older children can be taught to follow orders. Arnold wants his readers to understand that Bright is merely representing a political view. To convey that information, though, Arnold needs to show Bright's illogical thinking, without telling his readers that

Bright is illogical. Arnold's method for doing this is to attack Bright on an issue, one somewhat removed from the burning issues of the day, and one that Arnold can use to his advantage. He also uses irony each time he introduces Bright: "[t]hat other and greater prophet of intelligence, and reason, and the simple natural truth of things" (33) had said: "People who talk about what they call culture . . . mean a smattering of the two dead languages of Greek and Latin" (39). Although many of Arnold's readers heartily agree with Bright that culture is merely this useless, academic exercise of knowing languages, Arnold seizes the opportunity to turn this to his advantage:

The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education.  
(54)

Arnold more than implies here that Bright's "misconception of culture" comes from that very educational system that they are both discussing. To Arnold education is often characterized by rote memorization and drill, so he uses the terms "machinery" and "stock notions" to express what he believes is the result of that kind of education of children. He further argues that Mr. Bright's concept of culture is a stock notion because he was taught in a

system that educates through stock notions. In effect Arnold is blaming the "machinery" of education for Bright's "misconception," because he is a "product" of that "machinery":

Mr. Bright, who has a foot in both worlds, the world of middle-class Liberalism and the world of democracy, but who brings most of his ideas from the world of middle-class Liberalism in which he was bred, always inclines to inculcate that faith in machinery to which . . . English men are so prone. (64)

According to Arnold, Bright is also a man who sees the complexity of society as a "natural truth." The "natural truth" of Bright's thinking causes Arnold grave problems because he cannot attack it directly. Instead, he links Bright to a Hebraistic view of the world, and that view of the world to the Liberal decision-makers. The notions of "right reason" and "simple truths" are traditional ones that the Liberals dusted off to support their own platforms. Their clichés make real discussion difficult. Arnold's linking of Bright's clichés to an outdated, narrow-minded view help him to drive a wedge between the public's acceptance of clichés, and the cliché itself:

Mr. Bright, who loves to walk in the old ways of the Constitution, said forcibly in one of his great speeches, what many other people are every day saying less forcibly, that the central idea of English life and politics is the assertion of personal liberty. (74)

When Arnold mentions the "assertion of personal liberty," he is pointing out that the government uses this phrase to

mask the fact that my making education voluntary, they are saving money. Bright argues that one's personal liberty should not be violated by government laws requiring one's children be educated. Arnold uses the phrase "personal liberty" and "natural truth" as often as he can fit them in, in order to call attention to them, and make them sound like clichés. Once Arnold interjects humour, or creates clichés from the things Bright says, he can then challenge some of Bright's more popular causes directly.

One of those causes is discussed in Arnold's chapter six: "Our Liberal Practitioners." Arnold not only creates an opportunity for the reader to re-evaluate what the Liberals promote as a "simple natural truth," but also shows him/her the contradiction within the Liberals' "personal liberty" platform:

The bill proposed, as every one knows, to prevent the land of a man who dies intestate from going, as it goes now, to his eldest son, and was thought, by its friends and by its enemies, to be a step towards abating the now almost exclusive possession of the land of this country by the people whom we call the Barbarians. Mr. Bright, and other speakers on his side, seemed to hold that there is a kind of natural law or fitness of things which assigns to all a man's children a right to equal shares in the enjoyment of his property after his death; and that if, without depriving a man of an Englishman's prime privilege of doing what he likes by making what will he chooses, you provide that when he makes none his land shall be divided among his family, then you give the sanction of the law to the natural fitness of things, and inflict a sort of check on the present violation of this by the Barbarians.  
(175)



In this passage Arnold plays with the concept of a "natural truth" and "natural law" re-stimulating possible objections to the terms that those who disapprove of Darwin's theory of "natural selection" may have. In this excerpt as well, Arnold attempts to show that the law which allows a man's land to be inherited by the eldest son is as just, or unjust, as a law that requires a man's land to be divided after his death. He shows that Mr. Bright and the other Liberals were supporters of nothing more fair or more natural than what the existing system already provided. Arnold uses "as every one knows" when he begins this discussion to draw the matter into the realm of the familiar for his readers. Later in the discussion, he uses "doing as one likes," the title of one of his chapters, to remind his readers that this was the rallying issue of the Liberals. He calls attention to the Liberals' notion that everyone should be able to "do as he likes," yet, on the Liberals' issue of property rights, the citizen's rights to "do as he likes" are little changed from before. Arnold effectively shows that one law of mandatory action is merely replacing another, and that "personal liberty" is merely an abstract notion. He continues then to ask a series of questions:

If the almost exclusive possession of the land of this country by the Barbarians is a bad thing, is this practical operation of the Liberals, and the stock notion, on which it seems to rest, about the natural right of children to share equally in the enjoyment of

their father's property after his death, the best and most effective means of dealing with it? Or is it best dealt with by letting one's thought and consciousness play freely and naturally upon the Barbarians, this Liberal operation, and the stock notion at the bottom of it, and trying to get as near as we can to the intelligible law of things as to each of them? Now does any one, if he simply and naturally reads his consciousness, discover that he has any rights at all? (175)

Through these questions, Arnold asks his reader to consider fully the "rhetoric" of the Liberals. Arnold raises the problems inherent in the issue of inheritance because it is a good issue with which to raise questions about the Liberals' platform. The narrator need only present his perspective on the Liberals' issue, then ask whether anyone has "any rights at all?" The reader can then decide whether the "naturalness" of one solution for dealing with property is the very same as the other. An issue such as this, with the Liberals' attendant political posturing, makes the proposition seem to be a "natural truth." The Liberals' simplification, therefore reduction, of any issue to a "natural truth" becomes, for Arnold, a good subject to explore and a good one to ask his readers to question. Through examples such as these, Arnold encourages the reader to begin using critical judgment.

Once the reader becomes more critically aware of the complexity of the issues the Liberals deal with as natural truths, Arnold works to encourage the reader to transfer

his/her critical judgment to Bright as well. Arnold dislikes John Bright's ideas so much that he feels compelled to explore repeatedly the weaknesses in Bright's thinking throughout the text. One of Arnold's techniques of exploration is showing the shabby logic that Bright uses when he talks about the "natural fitness of things." Arnold attacks that cliché because the Liberals use it as an answer to every difficult question. Arnold works to dissociate it from its widespread public acceptance in order that the public might see that it does not explain anything. By showing Bright's thinking to the reader, Arnold reveals Bright's mechanical application of a word, "natural," to all situations. In so doing, Arnold also shows the inadequacy of the word to aid government's attempt to make decisions based on it. He then has, he hopes, successfully linked the Liberals with illogical decisions and has helped the reader through an inward search to examine the Liberals' mechanistic "naturalness" through the following discussion of "free trade":

Now, having first saluted free-trade . . . let us see whether even here, too, our Liberal friends do not pursue their operations in a mechanical way, without reference to any firm intelligible law of things, to human life as a whole, and human happiness; and whether it is not more for our good . . . if, instead of worshipping free-trade with them Helraistically, as a kind of fetish, and helping them to pursue it as an end in and for itself, we turn the free stream of our thought upon their treatment of it, and see how this is related to the intelligible law of human life, and to national

well-being and happiness. In short, suppose we Hellenize a little with free-trade. (185)

Arnold realizes the only way he can dispute the Liberals' "natural truth" is by replacing it with his method of "inward, organic growth." When he asks the reader to turn a "free stream of . . . thought" upon the idea of "free-trade," he is asking the reader to reconsider what the Liberals propose as "natural." Arnold's lack of respect for Bright's "stock notions" is apparent to the reader because of Arnold's ironic tone. Arnold controls the discussion through irony so that it is always an inward search for "truth": a search that raises questions. Arnold says that for himself "the deeper I go in my own consciousness, and the more simply I abandon myself to it, the more it seems to tell me that I have no rights at all, only duties" (175). In telling the reader about his own "inward" search, Arnold encourages the reader to follow his model, and journey into his/her own consciousness.

Arnold's ironic presentation of Bright and Harrison as "characters" allows the reader to see the political platforms of these men in a different light. The view from Arnold's perspective might lead a reader to begin to see these men as creating laws to satisfy their own economic and political ends through the ruse of satisfying a "natural order." As Arnold presents these men's ideas, sometimes seeming to praise, sometimes openly attacking, he is attempting to help the reader to see them with fresh

eyes. As well, Arnold frequently engages in a "dialogue" with these men, freeing the reader to observe them from a "disinterested" sideline. When Arnold gives one of them the "floor" by reproducing a segment of a past speech, the reader is aware that immediately following the speech, s/he will be asked to evaluate critically what is said. Arnold often guides this evaluation with questions of his own. His encouragement of his reader's questioning attitude toward his characters' ideas requires painstaking care because they are immensely popular with the public. If he engages in head-on debate he will be viewed by the public as a "foppish" academic. For these reasons, he re-conceives their statements, and provides a view of their thinking through a different lens.

Arnold is at his rhetorical best when he is re-conceiving Harrison's statements. Because Harrison's intellect and wit match Arnold's, Arnold takes immense satisfaction in the sparring. In an essay about culture that Arnold wrote prior to his Cornhill essays, he draws criticism from Harrison because, in Harrison's opinion, Arnold is all style and no substance. Harrison, in his reply in the Fortnightly Review, shows his concern that Arnold is but playing with the public:

I am glad we are agreed on that; a born poet, a consummate critic. He may yet loosen the yoke of the Philistine from your necks. But they tell me of late that he [Arnold] is but playing with the sling of David, and showing boys and girls how prettily he wields it. Tell me, do you

think that in very truth he hates this Goliath who oppresses you, and in his soul desires to slay him? (Harrison 603)

Harrison is distrustful of Arnold's intentions, thinking his social conscience is a masquerade. But Arnold will not let Harrison insinuate that he is insincere about spreading culture to the populace. He counters Harrison's criticisms of his intention when he says, in Culture and Anarchy, that:

I have often spoken in praise of culture. I have striven to make all my works and ways serve the interests of culture. I take culture to be something a great deal more than what Mr. Frederic Harrison and others call it: "a desirable quality in a critic of new books."  
(40)

Arnold's "I take culture to be something a great deal more" begins his long discussions of the many perspectives from which an understanding of culture could be drawn. Although the reader encounters these words of Harrison and Arnold in the introduction, it is not until the chapter "Sweetness and Light" that Arnold begins to explain the complexity of the term culture. As a representative voice against dilettante culture, Harrison is a well-known figure, whose background is the educated middle-class, much like Arnold's own. Harrison represents a learned view, but one that in Arnold's opinion is mistaken. Arnold's representation of the man shows him repeatedly as someone who misunderstands the importance of culture. In several places throughout the text, Arnold quotes

Harrison's words: "'The man of culture is in politics,'" cried Mr. Frederic Harrison, "'one of the poorest mortals alive'" (68); and further, Harrison said, the man of culture has a "'turn for small fault-finding, love of selfish ease, and indecision in action'" (68). Arnold's answer to these statements usually culminates in Arnold's showing Harrison his misunderstanding of the issues. In the introduction, Arnold reminds Harrison that what Arnold means when he talks about culture has nothing to do with politics: "Now for my part I do not wish to see men of culture asking to be entrusted with power" (40). Later, in "Sweetness and Light," Arnold again responds to Harrison's insistence that men of culture do not belong in politics and are only good for "professorial" tasks, by saying:

it [culture] is of use because, in presence of the fierce exasperation which breathes, or rather, I may say, hisses, through the whole production in which Mr. Frederic Harrison asks that question, it reminds us that the perfection of human nature is sweetness and light. (68-69)

In Culture and Anarchy, Harrison represents the typical reader of the book inasmuch as he belongs to the class, and has the educational background, of the audience Arnold is addressing. For that reason, Arnold introduces again and again what Harrison defined as culture. Arnold knows this definition is typical among the class he most hopes to change, and he works, through these "dialogues" with Harrison, to involve the reader in the interchange of opinion about what culture is.

Through the interchange of opinion Arnold is also simultaneously making the reader feel that s/he intimately knows the "characters" of Bright and Harrison, as well as s/he knows the narrator. His ironic phrasing, while being instrumental to the dialectic, is also instrumental to the reader's involvement in the "story." The reader becomes familiar with Bright, "that greater prophet of intelligence," or "that great Liberal." Story and dialectic become fused through Arnold's mastery of the reader's emotional response to Bright and what Arnold has done with Bright.

Arnold's political representatives further demonstrate that Arnold has brought the text to a state that could be considered a "lived experience" in so far as they must have reminded readers of the public figures with which they were familiar (Wells 20). His characters engage in discussions of recognizable and continuing issues, thus bringing the text's subject into the realm of the "typical." As Wells explains:

[t]he typical register of the text establishes its referential power. For a text to be read as referential, two contradictory relations between the text and lived experience must be established: the text must resemble the world of the reader, and it must be intelligible. (Wells 19)

Arnold ensures that the text will resemble the world of the reader by basing its characters and issues on the "lived experience" of the reader. Readers recognize that



Lord Elcho and Sir Thomas Bateson, as well as Bright and Harrison, are public figures in Arnold's time, and they also might suggest public figures of any time. These are men that all readers can recognize. In other words, the text refers to a real world of the nineteenth century, but yet is still intelligible to a twentieth century reader because the characters are universal as well as historical. So when Arnold mentions "the Rev. W. Cattle," the reader of any age enjoys the satiric image of a Reverend Cattle, even if s/he does not know that it is a creative misspelling of Rev. Cassel (the person he means to represent). Of these men, Arnold explains: "[they] . . . exemplify . . . the mean and the excess of aristocratic and middle-class qualities" (99). In representing the "mean" and the "excess" Arnold can easily satisfy the reader's enjoyment of a humorous satire with several more satiric portraits of public figures. Rather than do this, however, he characterizes each class as it was characterized by the other classes, through its most obvious traits and foibles. He uses the stereotype to work against itself. He does not favour the middle or working classes, or the aristocracy with kind treatment. Instead, he focuses on the deficiencies of each, making them all appear equally defective. The working-class deficiency he represents through the "Needy Knife-Grinder" who, he says "may serve as to give us the notion of defect in the

essential quality of a working class . . ." (100). The satirical names and actions of the characters he creates as working-class representatives fulfil the reader's expectations, as do his depictions of their personal traits such as greediness, drunkenness, and laziness. He satirizes the middle (Philistine), and upper (Barbarian) classes as well. They all become equal, and familiar, in their defects. The Philistines "we" come to know are the class with only one idea who "are particularly stiff-necked and perverse in the resistance to light" (101). His use of Bright and Harrison throughout the text serves to remind the reader of that class's defects. The Barbarians are possessors of "outward" culture only. For them, "it [culture] consisted principally in outward gifts and graces, in looks, manners, accomplishments, prowess" (103). He also includes their passion for "personal liberty, which appears to Mr. Bright the central idea of English life" (102). Defects such as these Arnold uses to remind all of his readers of the faults and prejudices within society and in a small measure helps to remind every reader of his/her own vulnerability.

As Arnold manipulates the prejudices of each group, he not only reveals the shallowness of the prejudice, but also reveals to the individual reader how incorrectly portrayed the reader him/herself was. Through this technique then, Arnold deflates the stereotypes by using

them. He encourages the reader to reconsider his prejudice through the reader's realization that the stereotype does not fit so well after all. The deflation and conflation of prejudices create an opportunity for the reader to revise his/her definitions and understandings. The reader is, to some degree, compelled to confront "the tension between the individual instance [his/her individual values and beliefs] and the general notion" (Wells 21). Arnold seems to want the individual to see self, group, and universal in a dialectical way (Wells 22).

As we have seen, Arnold uses individuals (e.g., Bright, Harrison, and others) to represent or personify belief systems within society. As well, he uses group stereotypes, or universal notions, to represent or reflect the groups' attitudes towards each other. Finally, he uses personification and representation to make "culture" and "anarchy" perform character-like roles. Culture is personified as the best self of each of us. Anarchy, although the term itself is seldom used, is clearly represented by "machinery."

A personified culture is defined in Arnold's "simple unsystematic way" as possessing several qualities. One of its qualities is that of an unselfish impulse toward family and social responsibilities. Specifically he says that culture represents:

the impulses towards action, help, and  
beneficence, the desire for removing human

error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery . . . [which all] come in as part of the grounds of culture. (44)

He also includes within his definition an aspect of self-help: "To walk staunchly by the best light one has, to be strict and sincere with oneself" (37). These two qualities together, one of wanting to "diminish human misery," and another of wanting an "inward" perfection, are both needed before true culture can take root and grow:

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances, --it is clear that culture . . . has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. (48-49)

Arnold believes that from a striving for perfection, culture grows in the individual. Arnold sees culture as an organic, living thing; therefore, as I mentioned earlier, he treats it as a hero and gives it a persona. He says: "Culture admits the necessity of the movement toward fortune-making"(61) and it "does not set itself against the games and sports"(61). On the spiritual side, he adds: "Culture's way of working for reason and the will of God is by directly trying to know more about them" (89). Finally, of the Philistine, "Culture," says:

Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, . . . would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition

that one was to become just like these people by having it? (52)

In short, "Culture," as one of Arnold's characters, is strong, moral, and perhaps slightly snobbish.

Culture's antithesis, "anarchy," however, has less shape in the text. Anarchy is a shady character with little definition. Yet it is a presence felt, as the evil that lurks when good (culture) is not strong enough to fight it. Arnold does not personify it, but allows it to appear the same as the thing in society it represents, "machinery." The word "anarchy" appears in the chapter immediately after the reader is introduced to "Sweetness and Light." Its chapter is entitled: "Doing As One Likes." The reader knows that "doing as one likes" is the Liberal catch phrase that brought approval from the public; accordingly, placing "anarchy" within that chapter informs the reader of the close association between "anarchy" and the Liberals: " . . . our notion of its being the great right and happiness of an Englishman to do as far as possible what he likes, [is putting us]. . . in danger of drifting towards anarchy" (75). Arnold later calls the "worship of freedom" an "anarchical tendency" because the notion is not balanced by an equally strong belief in individual responsibility and critical judgment. The lack of balance between rights and responsibilities leads him to connect "anarchy" to "machinery," because he believes "personal liberty" is mechanistically supported

without any thought being given to its dangers or limitations:

More and more, because of this our blind faith in machinery, because of our want of light to enable us to look beyond machinery to the end for which machinery is valuable; . . . this and that body of men all over the country, are beginning to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes. (76)

Arnold fears that the notion that an Englishman has the right "to do what he likes" will ultimately result in anarchy. He associates anarchy with machinery because he believes mechanistic thinking leads to intellectual decay, thus bringing about anarchy. "Our" resistance to anarchy is strengthened with more "light," and "a harmony of ideas"(85); in short, it equals culture. Arnold's anarchy goes beyond a mere lack of government rule; it is a human impoverishment. Anarchy, for Arnold, plays the role of the evil that causes human intellectual decay. As such, it brings about the collapse of society and turns social, political, and educational traditions into "machinery."

As symbolic representatives of the good and evil forces in society, "culture" and "anarchy" remain necessarily fluid. The reader personally constructs, or mediates, culture as a hero and anarchy as an evil foe. The terms come alive as a part of the reader's "lived experience." Susan Wells explains that "such mediations establish the text as a dialogue between authors and

readers, a dialogue in which the constraints of language and ideology can be subverted"(34). When Arnold uses political figures as characters, or turns the words "culture" and "anarchy" into battling forces, he is not minimizing their importance, or reducing them to caricatures. Instead, he is giving them life in order to make them seem tangible so that the reader can deal with them as something concrete. The text he creates involves the reader in a process which encourages the reader to deal intellectually with a personified culture and its antithesis. The reader imagines Bright and Harrison in the context in which Arnold presents them. Arnold displays their words in an unfamiliar context, thereby releasing the reader from his/her previously held "social construction" of them while compelling him/her to reconstruct an understanding of the men and their ideas in a new way. In order to understand Bright and Harrison in a critically conscious manner, i.e., free from what they represent as public "idols," Arnold believes he needs to reproduce "what everyone knows" about them, but reproduce it in a manner that provides the reader with an opportunity to mediate, or rethink, "what everyone knows." The mediation allows the reader to accept the character as a "true" representation, but at the same time Arnold, working through irony, changes what is "true." Susan Wells explains the difficult process of creating a "true"

or "typical" character which is still a representative one:

The type character might stand, then, as an example of the typical's direct resemblance to lived experience. But of course, things are not so simple. When we want to dismiss a character as unrealistic, wooden, or purely literary, we describe him or her as "just a type." We acknowledge, in this description that unreflected social experience is not, after all, very good experience, and that we demand some kind of mediation, some transformation of what everyone knows, before we are willing to accept an image as true. (Wells 21)

Although many of Arnold's readers probably dismiss his characters as "just types," he in fact uses many rhetorical strategies to anticipate that reaction. One of his most intricate strategies is his use of the representative figure as a transformative device.

In this chapter I have explored Arnold's rhetorical strategy for representing both human figures and symbols. His strategy demands from the reader a high level of awareness and involvement with the text. With Arnold's prose it is easy to fear, as Schiller feared of Goethe's work, that many readers will believe they understand the text because they understand its anecdotes and stereotypes, when in fact, they have merely understood its surface and not begun to understand the subtext.



## CONCLUSION

Within Culture and Anarchy Matthew Arnold raises important questions about social and political issues by using a rhetorical method that encourages the reader to become involved in the text. Arnold's method for involving the reader relies heavily on two strategies, both of which evolved from the Bildungsroman, a genre that assumes that the role of narrator and the role of reader are active ones. The two strategies within his method are his courtship of the audience and his creation of representative characters. Both of these strategies demand that the narrator interacts with the reader, appealing to and addressing him/her throughout the text.

These techniques, although observable in others' works, are uniquely applied in Arnold's Culture and Anarchy (Landow 51-57). He is not another Carlyle, or Newman, or Ruskin. Richard Ohmann has suggested that a difference arises because "Arnold and his associates write in a society where no common framework of feelings and assumptions can be taken for granted, and their prose strains to provide the framework," (303) each attempting to provide it in his own way. John Holloway suggests that

Arnold's particular framework is the "value frame" or "the desirable temper of mind in which to conduct an enquiry" (215).

In my discussion of Arnold's work, I have shown that he creates a dialectic, which becomes his framework. This dialectic he achieves by continuously suggesting to his readers that the philosophies of Hebraism and Hellenism are not poles apart, but are one and the same. His readers then must take their own positions against Arnold's view, creating a dialectic. He conducts the dialogue as a courtship between his reader and himself in a friendly and accommodating tone that allows him to preserve in his reader a "desirable temper of mind."

Arnold created his unique style under the influence of European writers rather than British writers. His greatest affinity was for the works of Goethe, an innovative stylist himself. Arnold's Culture and Anarchy exhibits Arnold's own adaptation of many of Goethe's techniques.

## NOTES

1 The edition of Culture and Anarchy that I refer to, and quote from is J. Dover Wilson's reprint of the 1869 edition. I chose to use it because it was Arnold's first revision of the essays into book form and was thus closer to his original impulse to express the ideas contained in the book.

2 Arnold's essays in Cornhill that comprise Culture and Anarchy were unavailable to me; I therefore used E.K. Brown's account of Arnold's textual changes to support my discussion in chapter one.

3 According to Alden and Shaffner, the Bildungsroman has become synonymous with novels of self-education and "apprenticeship." It is usually used to describe a "kind of novel which flourished in France and England as well as Germany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (Alden 1). The Bildungsroman generally has a hero who is the prime mover in his/her own "organic development" (Shaffner 18). Although Culture and Anarchy is clearly not a novel, and does not have a hero, it does contain many of the features that Shaffner lists as necessary to the Bildungsroman such as the belief that a person can become a master of his/her own fate, a strong belief in choice in a person's life, and an affirmative attitude toward life as a whole. Arnold as narrator expresses these ideals and encourages the reader to adopt them and become the hero of his/her own life.

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